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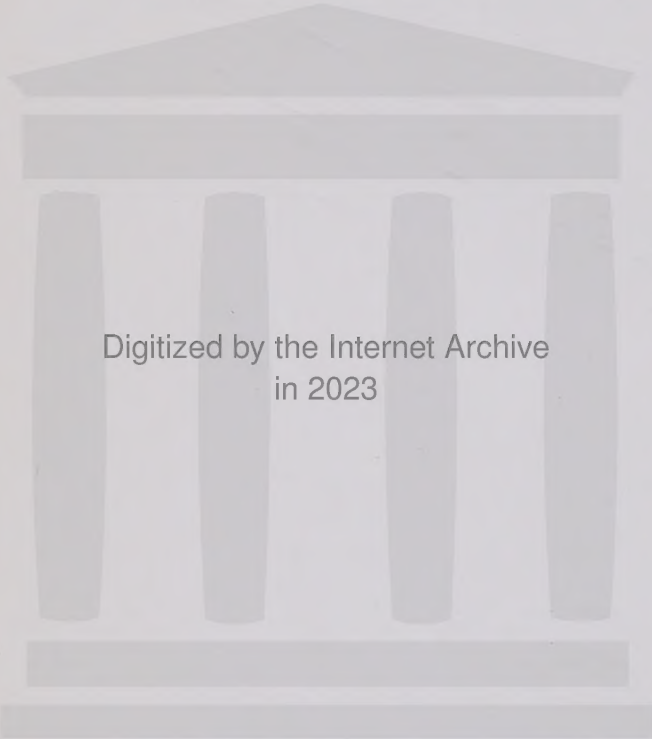
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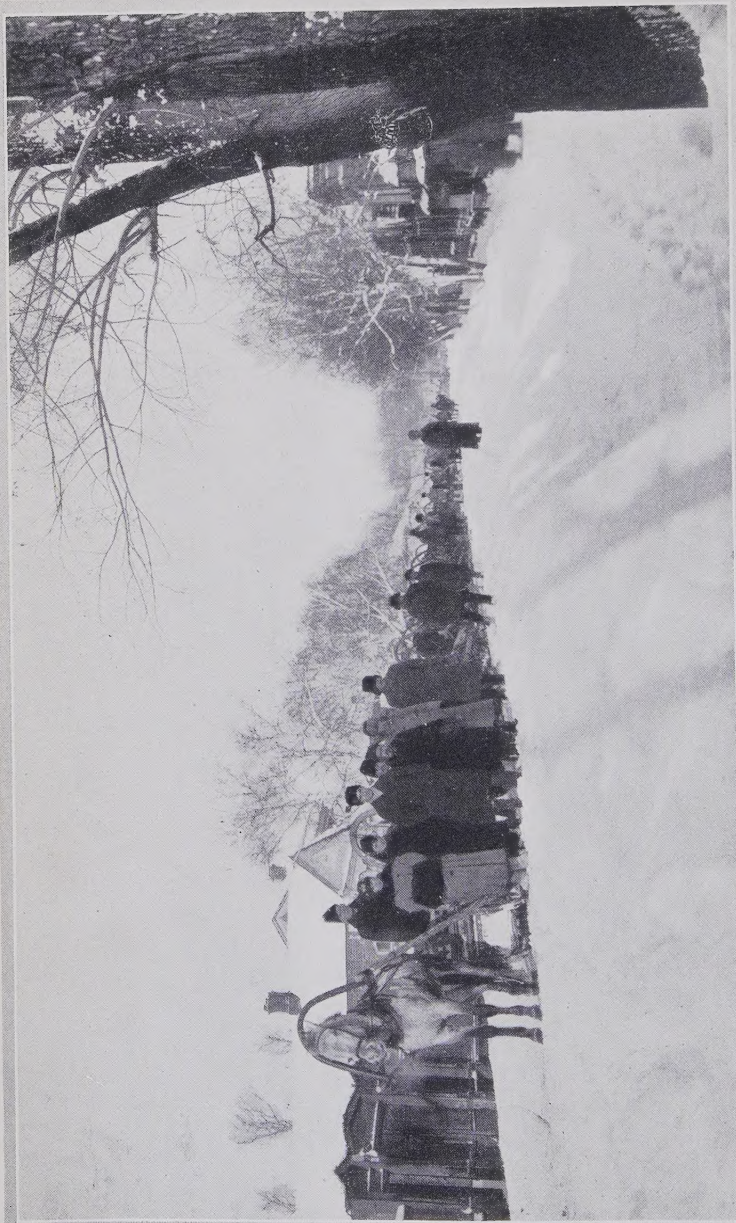
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Transporting A.R.A. food into the interior

ON THE TRAIL OF THE *RUSSIAN FAMINE*

FRANK ALFRED GOLDER

and

LINCOLN HUTCHINSON

*Special Investigators of the Russian Unit of the
American Relief Administration*



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W

E are dedicating this book to you, fellow-workers in the Russian Unit of the American Relief Administration. In no other country in Europe was your work beset with more difficulties, dangers, and suspicions than in Russia, and in no country did you work harder and accomplish more. You have written for your country a glorious page in the history of Russia. At the famine front you fought starvation, typhus, plague, and you not only saved lives but also won the hearts of the people and gave them new courage. The friendship that grew up between the Russians and the Americans was close, sincere, and lasting. Although the Unit is broken up and scattered, it is yet bound together by common memories and wholehearted loyalty to The Chief. Wherever you are, we greet you!

PREFACE

Between 1914 and 1922 Russia lived through war, revolution, famine, and plague, misfortunes from which she had suffered before, but not always in the same sequential order. It is with the famine that this book has to do. Although the hunger was at its worst in the period of bolshevism, it had already been felt in the days of the monarchy. The men associated with the work of the American Relief Administration saw starvation coming and prepared to stand by long before the world thought about it. And when the call for help came in 1921, the A.R.A. had a plan ready and a trained personnel to put in the field. We two were among the first to be sent to the famine front, and we had had some preparation for our task. We were students of Russian history and institutions; we had been in Russia before the outbreak of the war and had followed her course during the period of conflict. We had had some experience in relief work in Europe, knew something of its problems, especially the difficulty of securing accurate information. It was our duty as special investigators for the A.R.A. to follow wherever the famine called, to investigate on the spot the food situation, the best methods of relief, and to report back to our headquarters at Moscow. In this way it came about that we made the various journeys described in this book.

In addition to doing this purely technical work, we felt that, as students of the social sciences, we should record as objectively as possible the atmosphere and impressions of the present for the use of the historian of the future. We realized that we had before us a very unusual situation, and we were interested to learn how people acted who lived through it and how it affected us as observers. What we saw, heard, and felt we wrote down in our notebooks. Since 1923 Russia has changed, our views have changed, but we have left our notes unchanged except in the matter of form. We give here a picture of Russia as we saw her during our sojourn, and nothing more.

We do not discuss Russia's political and social system and

are not passing judgment. We have no personal scores to settle and no complaints to make. We are convinced that the Soviet government tried to co-operate with us in so far as that was possible. When it failed to do so the failure was generally due either to inability or to a misunderstanding of our point of view. At first the Soviet officers were suspicious of the motives of the A.R.A., but when they convinced themselves that the only object of the organization was to relieve suffering they gave us more confidence. We were content to co-operate in famine work and to disagree in politics.

F. A. GOLDER
LINCOLN HUTCHINSON

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
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ON THE TRAIL OF THE RUSSIAN FAMINE

I

RUSSIAN AGRICULTURE AND THE FAMINE

For a clear understanding of the causes of the 1921 famine in Russia it is essential to keep clearly in mind, as a background, the chief features of Russian agriculture in normal times. We must picture to ourselves a widespread country with relatively dense population (sixty-two to the square mile in European Russia compared to thirty-six in the United States), with a limited agricultural area, and with certain characteristics of climate and organization which rendered production peculiarly variable.

The agricultural lands of the country cover an unusually small percentage of the entire area—only about one-fourth, compared with well over fifty per cent in the United States—and the most productive of them are confined to relatively limited regions in the south and southeast of European Russia and the southern half of Western Siberia. The regions of most fertile soil, and therefore intrinsically capable of producing the largest surpluses, are unfortunately characterized by great extremes of temperature, a low general average rainfall (about twenty inches), and periods, sometimes of several successive years, of deficient precipitation.

Agricultural methods are mainly primitive, fertilizers are relatively little used, the ancient three-field system still largely persists, and intensive cultivation along modern lines is rare. The average yield is consequently small (eleven to twelve bushels per acre) and the total crop peculiarly sensitive to climatic changes. Hence the notorious fact that Russia has always been a land of periodic shortage of food and occasional

famine. From 1885 down to the outbreak of the World War, there had been three such periods of short crops: the four years, 1890-93; then, three years, 1906-8; and also two years, 1910-11. The peasant has learned to carry over large stocks from years of surplus, but in general these do not exceed one year's supply, so that two successive bad years usually bring privation and a third or fourth year is very apt to spell real famine.

Another feature of the climate further embarrasses the agriculturalist. Russia as a whole is much farther north than most American readers realize. The southern edge of the agricultural region is in about the latitude of Boston, and at least two-thirds of the total arable land lies north of our Canadian frontier. Some of it runs up into the latitude of Northern Labrador. Except in the southern half of the agricultural area the growing season is very short. Plowing and sowing must be done with one great burst of activity the moment the condition of the soil permits, and harvests must be gathered with equal rapidity the moment they are ripe. Any slightly adverse weather condition which delays, even for a few days, either the spring planting or the autumn ripening and harvesting or the autumn plowing and sowing is a far more serious matter than in more southern latitudes having longer growing periods and hence greater elasticity in agricultural procedure.

The agricultural organization has always been peculiarly rigid. Down to the so-called Stolypin land reforms of 1907-10 there had been only a very slow development of flexibility. The land was held partly by the Imperial family, partly by other large landed proprietors, but mainly by the peasants themselves, either as individuals or as collective peasant societies, institutions which had persisted from a very early date in Russian history. These collective societies included from ten to a hundred, or even in some cases as many as a thousand families. Each family owned a small plot, on which stood its house, garden, etc.; but the agricultural land was held in common and could be neither bought nor sold in individual

parcels, the possessor of each allotment being regarded merely as a temporary holder and cultivator of the parcel assigned to him. From time to time new repartitions were made, each member receiving a new allotment in a new place of larger or smaller size in case the population had meanwhile diminished or increased. The crops to be planted were determined by the community authorities. There was little opportunity for individual initiative, for the individual was bound by decisions of the group and was not permitted to withdraw from the community or to alienate his parcel. Only on the large estates, which, however, covered only about a quarter of the agricultural lands, were modern methods, modern machinery and equipment, or modern systems of cultivation such as rotation of crops, dry farming, etc., beginning to be introduced.

In the interest of improved agricultural practice, it was the policy of the later years of the Empire to foster the development of larger-scale farming by modern methods. The break-up of the old collective societies, which by their very nature were the least progressive, was regarded as a necessary preliminary step toward improvement; and even before the Stolypin reforms considerable progress had been made. A new impulse was, however, given by the reforms themselves, which made it possible for any progressive-minded individual in any of the old groups to free himself from his hereditary bonds and get permanent individual ownership of his parcel of land with all the privileges, such as the right of purchase, sale, and mortgage, which go with such ownership. He could now cultivate independently, could make his own credit arrangements, introduce new methods if he saw fit, or, if his experiments were unsuccessful, sell out to other cultivators such as the larger-landed proprietors.

These laws stimulated the movement which had already begun. There was considerable redistribution of land; the number of individual private owners increased; new groupings were made of smaller parcels into larger, more coherent, and more easily worked farms; there was some growth in the larger

estates; and the higher yield on these larger, better-equipped, and better-managed farms was among the important causes which raised the general average yield for the whole country, between 1906 and 1914, by some twenty per cent.

The World War stimulated agricultural production to some extent through the greater necessity for attention to food supplies and the general rise in foodstuff prices; but it had an opposite effect as well. The drawing away for the army of millions of men and farm animals and the general disturbance of normal activity through war conditions more than counter-balanced the impulse to produce larger crops. If we may judge from such statistics as are available for the period, the area under cultivation within the present frontiers of European Russia declined between the outbreak of the war and the revolution of 1917 some twenty-five per cent; in the Ukraine, ten per cent; and in Asiatic Russia, twenty-five per cent. There does not, however, appear to have been any serious falling off in average yield.

The situation on the eve of the February revolution of 1917 was that the cultivated area had declined considerably, the yield was still good, the total production was still sufficient for the population, but there was no considerable surplus left for export.

Then came the revolution of February 1917, followed a few months later by the Bolshevik revolution. Instead of a revival of agriculture which might have been expected with the withdrawal of Russia from the war, there followed a steady decline (relieved slightly by a temporary small increase in 1918), which continued down to 1922.

This retrogression was attributed almost unanimously by the enemies of bolshevism to the devastating effects of the whole communistic scheme, especially the communistic land policy. The Bolsheviks themselves, on the other hand, at least in most of their official public utterances, put the blame elsewhere: on the "boycott" of Russia by the Western Powers; on the civil disturbances of the revolution itself; on the civil

wars promoted by bands of Whites (anti-revolutionary forces) within the country; and, last but not least, on what the Bolsheviks call the foreign invasions led by Iudenich, Kolchak, Wrangel, and others, which kept parts of the country, notably Siberia, the Crimea, a large part of the Ukraine, and most of the Volga Basin, at one time or another subject to all the disturbances and devastations of war. These causes together, the Bolsheviks claim, prevented recovery, caused the further decline of agriculture, and left the country peculiarly vulnerable when the weather conditions in 1920 and 1921 proved adverse.

The boycott may probably be eliminated as an important cause; for, as we have already seen, production had already so far declined before the revolution that there was little if any surplus for export. The wars and civil disturbances, on the other hand, were unquestionably an important factor; yet there is abundant evidence that they were not a sole cause. A full explanation of the decline must include the effects of the economic policy introduced by the Bolsheviks, a policy which even the Soviet leaders themselves long ago recognized to have been disastrous.

Approximately eighty-five per cent of all the people of Russia are rural. The problem of so adjusting the political and economic theories of the revolution as to meet their interests has, ever since the first mad riot of innovation, been recognized as a vital one. Working plans for "nationalization," "socialization," "collectivism," etc., which are acceptable to the industrial classes in the towns may fall far short of satisfying the desires of an agricultural population who, in Russia as everywhere else in the world, are characterized by a much higher degree of inherited individualism. The history of the development of Russian land policy since the revolution is the story of an attempt to bring into some kind of harmony the divergent interests and sentiments of the industrial and the agricultural population.

The first step in the new land policy after the revolution was a declaration in favor of the "socialization" of all land. The

basic principle of the law (February–May, 1918) was that all private ownership of the soil was abolished and that all land was to be given into the “possession” of individuals who should actually work it in person. The distribution was to be made on the principle of “equalized land possession.” The individual possessor became an employee of the State, and the produce, after the deduction of enough to meet the officially determined requirements of the cultivator, became the property of the State.

From later developments it has become apparent that the great mass of the peasants, only a minute fraction of whom can read or write, failed entirely to grasp the fact that this law, which they hailed with delight, confiscated their land as well as that of the Imperial family and other privileged classes. The thing which they did see and gladly proceeded to act upon was that the large estates were declared confiscated and were to be parceled out among the people.

But there were others also who wanted land. Veterans of the war, industrial workers from the towns thrown out of employment by the decay of industries or attracted by the lure of country life, and many others drifted from the cities to the land to claim a share. They were far from welcome, yet their rights under the new law were just as clear as those of the peasants; and their position in the political machine was such as to make it inevitable that the government should go as far as possible in recognizing their claims.

Serious conflict arose at once between the old peasantry and the newcomers backed by the central authorities, and accentuated the disorganization of agriculture which had already been begun by the foreign and civil wars. It was probably also the main cause of a complete restatement of land policy just one year (February 1919) after the passage of the first law mentioned above.

The new decree, entitled “Regulations Concerning Socialist Land Administration and the Measures Facilitating the Introduction of the Socialist System of Agriculture,” gave legal form to a movement which had begun some months before.

It declared definitely in favor of "large Soviet estates, rural communes,¹ group agriculture, and all other forms of collective use of land," and stated that "all forms of the individual use of the land should be regarded as merely temporary and doomed to destruction."

The law, without any preliminary explanation or excuse for so violent a departure from the principle of equalized possession and cultivation of land by individuals as agents of the owner State, proceeded at great length to prescribe the methods for carrying out this new policy. It did not in terms prohibit individual farming; but by a rather cleverly devised gradation of privileges in regard to choice of lands, rights to State assistance in the form of machinery, equipment, and credits, and in the employment of hired labor, etc., it created pressure in favor of the collective forms of cultivation which it approved. Beginning at the top with the "Soviet farm" there was a progressive grading downward through the various sorts of collective activities (village community, rural commune, collective associations) to individual farms, which were so meagerly provided for in the matter of State assistance or allotment of land that the extension of this form of cultivation became practically impossible.

This decree was even more definite than its predecessor in the statement that ownership of all land vests in the State and that the entire produce, except the carefully defined quantities required for seed, for food for the agricultural population, and for fodder for domestic animals, must be placed at the disposal of the State.

For the earliest part of the period there is a great deal of obscurity as to the process by which the new government got

¹The term "rural commune" as here used refers to a new species of organization of which some five hundred developed in 1918. It was made up of soldiers, industrial workers, etc., who migrated to the villages from the cities in search of land, and who, finding the land occupied, organized into groups, seized or procured land by other means, and began to operate it in common.

possession of the surplus—apparently there was a large amount of promiscuous “requisitioning” during the first year; but by 1918 the process became more organized, and from then on there are “official” statements of quantities taken, small at first but growing rapidly larger as the necessity for government feeding of the non-rural population, deprived of their pre-war occupations, became progressively more pressing.

For many years it has been the custom in Russia, for agricultural statistical purposes, to divide the country into several great “regions,” the chief of which are the Consuming Region (in which agriculture does not ordinarily produce more than enough to meet the needs of the population) and the Producing Region (which ordinarily produces a surplus). The government, in organizing its requisitioning system, looked to the latter region to supply the bulk of its needs. If the official figures are at all to be relied on, it took from this region, for each acre cultivated, several times as much as from the Consuming Region. There are many indications that this inequality of burden roused deep resentment among the peasants of the Producing Region and was a powerful factor in reducing the area under cultivation. In the Consuming Region, between the last pre-revolution year (crop year 1916–17) and the last pre-famine year (crop year 1920–21) the decrease in cultivated area was only 1,400,000 desiatins (18 per cent); in the Producing Region the decrease was nearly 10,000,000 desiatins (33 per cent). The fact that the decline was so disproportionate in regions of heavy requisitioning lends considerable color to the claim of the opponents of the policy that the system itself contained the germs of agricultural ruin.

In addition to these legalized requisitions by the central government there were also other much more irregular proceedings of the same sort. Detachments of the Red Army, time and time again, took the law into their own hands and levied on the farmers without much regard either to the legal quotas assessed to them or to the needs of the farming population itself. There was also a conflict in authority between the cen-

tral government and the various local governments—guberniia, uiezd, or volost—the latter continuing to assert the right to “tax” on their own account, in many cases with little regard to the claims of the central authorities. The peasant found himself between the devil and the deep sea, and the difficulties were greatest in that region which everyone regarded as the inexhaustible source of food supplies—the Producing Region.

This situation was bad enough, but it was at least one which might conceivably be remedied by a reasonable adjustment of conflicting claims and a proper exercise of authority. There was another difficulty, however, which was much more fundamental, one much less open to solution—the decay of the industries on which the farmer had depended for supplies of manufactured and other goods in exchange for his surplus foodstuffs. Before the war the peasants purchased annually approximately a billion and a half dollars’ worth of manufactured goods, seven-eighths of which were of domestic, and one-eighth of foreign origin; while now, the total domestic production had fallen to about two hundred million, and the imports were negligible.

The first steps taken by the revolutionary government in the matter of industry had been rather moderate. A general law in December 1917 authorized the “nationalization” of all industry, but apparently the intent at that time was merely that the State should physically take over and operate only the “heavy” or “basic” industries such as coal and iron production, metallurgical enterprises, and transportation. Other industries, though nationalized in the sense that the State was regarded as the sole proprietor, were to be left under the management of their former owners, who would now, however, carry on merely as agents or employees of the State instead of for their own private account.

The government began, almost immediately after the passage of the law just mentioned, by taking over the direct control of certain large metallurgical works. The movement, once started, gained momentum rapidly. On the one hand, the proletarian masses clamored unceasingly for complete elimination

of the old bourgeoisie, whom they regarded as the cause of all their woes; and on the other, many of the owners and managers of the industrial plants over which the government had at first had no intention of taking control either would not or could not function efficiently under the new conditions. To keep such plants running the government either had to devise some other form of management or had itself to assume direct control and management.

There followed a long period of experiment. In some cases the government undertook the management, the workmen in the industries becoming the direct employees of the State. This in general was true of the larger industries. In many more cases, the attempt was made to maintain the industries as quasi-private enterprises under new management, the most usual form of which was the so-called "factory committee." A factory committee was composed of representatives of the workmen and employees of the factory. Sometimes they included the former proprietors or managers, if they chose to remain; the controlling voice was always, however, with the workmen.

By one method or another—by direct State control and management, by setting up of factory committees, and by various other processes—the old owners were progressively expropriated, and the management of most enterprises passed into inexperienced hands directly or indirectly subject to political control. By the end of 1920 nearly all industries except the purely domestic household ones had come under this direct or indirect control of the State.

Judged by results in the productivity of industry the "system" worked badly from the start. Production declined catastrophically. By 1920 the factory output of the country had dropped to less than one-seventh of its pre-war figure. Data compiled by the Soviet authorities comparing the supplies of Russian-produced commodities of general consumption in 1912 and 1920, all reduced to value in gold rubles at 1912 prices, show a decline in available output per head of population, in all but one case, of from 18 to 95 per cent. The figures follow.

SUPPLIES IN GOLD RUBLES PER CAPITA

	Pre-War	1920
Sugar and molasses	4.87	0.24
Tobacco	1.03	0.36
Vegetable oils	0.74	0.08
Confectionery	0.33	0.02
Coffee substitutes	0.02	0.04
Textiles	6.77	0.91
Kerosene	0.88	0.11
Soap and perfumery	0.36	0.07
Paper	0.33	0.12
Matches	0.15	0.03
Crude petroleum	1.28	0.26
Coal	0.88	0.34
Peat	0.11	0.09
Vehicles	0.64	0.10
General machinery	0.59	0.05
Agricultural machinery and implements	0.34	0.04

Another particularly noticeable feature was the decline in efficiency of the individual workman. The output per man in 1920 compared with that in 1912 was as follows:

Industry	Per Cent	Industry	Per Cent
Woolen	60	Coal mining	25
Linen	44	Other mining	11
Cotton	22	Woodworking	21
Petroleum	50	Metallurgical	11

There were, naturally, many differences of opinion as to the causes. Many blamed the old proprietors and managers who refused to work under the new conditions; others blamed the laborers who thought more of their own ease than of loyally producing goods for their fellow-Communists; others still, the foreign blockade and boycott which interfered with procuring raw materials. But a large and apparently increasing party laid the blame on the general disorganization which had come with the attempt to introduce communistic principles into industry. All sorts of schemes were suggested for remedying an evil which most thinking Russians saw spelled ruin for the

country. The schemes fell into two general classes: on the one hand, schemes for still further increasing State control; on the other, plans for a retreat from the communistic plan and a revival of private enterprise and initiative in industry.

For a time, the former policy, of which Trotsky appears to have been the leading advocate, triumphed; and the experiment was tried of militarizing industry. Those who failed to play their part, whether as directors, managers, clerks, or workmen, must be compelled to meet their obligations to the State. If they failed to function as employees of the State they must become the industrial soldiers of the State.

At first, after this mobilizing of labor, there was a slight increase in the production, but it proved to be purely temporary. The early months of 1921 in some industries were slightly better than in the corresponding ones of 1920, but by summer a new decline had set in and in nearly all the more important industries production had fallen even lower than in the previous year.

The revolution and the industrial policy of the new government had thus already brought industrial production down to a small fraction of its pre-war volume. In addition to this, the whole system of banking, credit, and exchange had been reduced to chaos; the transportation system was practically in ruins; and all possibility that private initiative could help the farmers in making purchases from abroad had been eliminated through the government's having assumed complete control of all foreign dealings. The farmer found himself in a position which rendered it wholly impossible to procure, in exchange for any surplus which he might raise, the many essential things which he formerly had been able to purchase. His incentive to produce in excess of his own needs was lost.

Through this combination of factors there arose this situation: on the eve of the drought of 1921 the area under cultivation had fallen to such a point that, although with normal yield and with stocks carried over from previous years there was still enough food in the country to feed the people if the

foodstuffs could have been uniformly distributed, the government was having increasing difficulty in obtaining supplies for distribution; people in the industrial regions and the towns were already experiencing great distress; and the country as a whole was sailing dangerously close to the wind in the matter of food supplies.

The drought of 1921 brought disaster. Like nearly all of its predecessors, it hit hardest the great producing regions in the Volga Basin, the southeast, and the Ukraine. The gross production that year of all cereals (plus potatoes reduced to cereal equivalent) dropped to about 680 pounds per capita. The normal consumption in pre-war days for all purposes—seed, food, fodder, industries, etc.—had been approximately 950 pounds. The actual needs in 1921, taking into consideration the reduction in seed requirements due to decreased area and the smaller demand for fodder resulting from the decline in domestic animals, were in the neighborhood of 800 pounds.

On this basis, the total crop fell about 7,000,000 tons, or fifteen per cent, short of requirements. This would not necessarily have meant starvation if normal economic organization had still been in existence and the machinery of exchange had still been operating. The hold-over stock in the hands of the peasants had in pre-war days been some five or six million tons. It had probably been reduced by the disturbances of war, revolution, and the communistic policy, and by the partial crop failure of 1920; but in spite of these reductions there is a strong probability that it was still, in the early months of 1921, something like 4,000,000 tons. This left an actual shortage, if these reserve stocks could have been brought out through the normal processes of exchange and high prices, of say 3,000,000 tons, or only six and one-half per cent, a deficit which would have been of little importance if it could have been spread uniformly throughout the entire population. It would have meant only a slight curtailment of consumption without any very serious distress or permanent injury.

Bearing all these facts in mind, one is forced to the con-

clusion that the main causes of the 1921 famine were threefold: (1) the wars and civil disturbances from 1914 to 1920, which had reduced agricultural production to some extent chiefly by diminishing the area under crops; (2) the economic "reforms" of the revolutionary government, which accentuated the decline by removing the peasant's incentive to produce surpluses, partly through the direct discouragement resulting from the requisitioning system, and even more through the impossibility, owing to the decay of manufactures and the breakdown of transportation and of the machinery of exchange, of his getting the things he needed in payment for whatever surpluses he might raise; and (3) the drought of 1921, which, however, would probably have been of minor consequence if the other two causes had been absent. In short, the famine was chiefly of political and economic rather than climatic origin.

As already stated, the drought of 1921, like most Russian droughts, affected chiefly the southeast and the south. The guberniias which suffered most seriously were those of the Volga Basin from about Nijni-Novgorod south to the mouth of the river; those along the Asiatic frontier from about Perm south to the Caspian Sea; portions of the southern Don Basin and Ciscaucasia; and approximately the southern half of the Ukraine. Transcaucasia and Western Siberia were also affected to some extent, but the damage there was relatively slight.

The total area of arable lands in the states in which crop shortage was seriously felt amounted to well over fifty per cent of the agricultural lands of the entire country; and this whole vast region has frequently been spoken of as the "famine area." A more correct statement, however, would make the true famine area much smaller, for there were very few of these guberniias which were affected throughout their entire acreage. In the Volga Basin, for example, the most severe drought damage was mainly confined to a relatively narrow belt on each side of the river, varying in width from fifty to one hundred miles. The total area of agricultural lands in which the rainfall was seriously below normal, instead of being fifty per cent of

the arable area of the whole country, was almost certainly not over forty per cent, and even within this reduced area the crop was far from being a total failure everywhere. Total crop failure probably did not cover more than twenty per cent of the agricultural area of the country.

There has been interminable discussion as to the total number of people affected, the figure of the "starving" ranging all the way from ten million up to nearly fifty million. The fact is that it is impossible to do much more than guess at the number, not only because of the inadequacy of such statistical data as are available but also because of difficulty of definition. Many great groups among the population did not suffer at all, if we except the minor privation resulting from the impossibility of obtaining just the same abundance and variety of food as had been consumed in pre-war days. At the other end of the scale were large classes who within a short time after the harvest failure found themselves without any food whatever and facing sheer starvation. Between these two extremes were all manner of gradations from simple privation and distress down to undernourishment so serious as to lead to disease or permanent physical injury.

Some very large classes were supplied in comparative abundance. The army and the millions of State employees and their dependents were, in general, rationed by the State; the new bourgeoisie which had sprung up on the ruins of the old had the means with which to purchase supplies; the peasants in all parts of the country except the drought region held stocks which were ample—in some sections they even had unusual abundance. Those who suffered most were: in the cities, the old aristocracy and bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia, and to a lesser extent some of the old industrial workers whose incomes had vanished; and, in the country regions of crop failure, nearly all classes, especially the peasants themselves.

The total number of sufferers in the cities and towns was, however, relatively much smaller than on the farms and in the villages of the drought area. In spite of general disorganiza-

tion, in spite of the enormous difficulties of transportation and the almost total lack of the ordinary facilities for exchange, a good deal of trade did manage to persist. In carts, on pack animals, on the backs of "sackers," in every imaginable way, food trickled in from sections of relative plenty to cities and towns and was bartered off to those who still had goods which the peasant was willing to accept in payment.

These remnants of a system of exchange did something to relieve the pressure, not only in the large industrial cities but also in the larger towns, even in the midst of the worst of the famine districts. Thus the greatest suffering of all, the most serious direct effect of famine—death and the diseases due to malnutrition—prevailed in the agricultural villages and communities of the drought area among the peasants who either had no accumulated possessions which they could exchange for food or were so far removed from any districts of relative abundance as to make communication impossible. In this respect the famine in Russia differed widely in its effects from the post-war food shortages in Central Europe, where the worst suffering was in the towns.

Bearing in mind that the total urban population of what is now included in Russia and the affiliated republics in Europe and Asia is less than 18,000,000; that the total population of the area seriously affected by drought was about 25,000,000; that the government collected by requisition and probably distributed enough food to meet the urgent requirements of at least 14,000,000 people; that the "sackers" and other small private traders were transporting a small but steady stream of foodstuffs from the country into the cities; that some, at least, of the peasants in the famine districts still held concealed stocks from previous harvests, and that others still had accumulated household and personal goods and were near enough to regions of plenty to be able to barter them for food; and that it is possible to make a very considerable temporary reduction in food consumption without serious injury to health; it would appear to be a reasonable guess that the total number of people

in the country who were faced with death or permanent physical injury through lack of food did not at any one time exceed ten to fifteen million.

The story of the efforts made to relieve the famine has been told so frequently that it is unnecessary to give, here, more than a summary of the main facts. Early in the summer of 1921 the Soviet government became convinced of its inability to cope with the situation without foreign help, and through Maxim Gorky sent out its appeal to Mr. Hoover. The response by the American Relief Administration, of which Mr. Hoover was the head, and by other organizations was immediate, and the work of relief began early in September.

Between that time and the end of August 1922 there were sent into the drought area of Russia and the Ukraine, as gifts, through the American Relief Administration and affiliated organizations, and through various other foreign organizations, such as the Society of Friends, the Swedish, Dutch, and Czechoslovak Red Cross, the International Trade Union Federation, the Save the Children Fund, and several others, a grand total of food (all reduced to grain equivalent) of approximately 500,000 tons. Beginning in September 1921 with the giving of a supplementary daily meal to 500,000 children, the work grew until at its peak in the late spring of 1922 some 14,000,000 children and adults were being given at least a supplementary meal. At the time of its greatest activity the American Relief Administration alone was distributing food to 11,000,000 persons. But it would not be fair to the Russian government or people to end the story here, as the following data show:

Source	Tons
Russian Central Relief Committee (largely private donations)	300,000
Russian and Ukrainian government purchases through the American Relief Administration	165,000
Russian government purchases from the Far Eastern Republic, Finland, etc.	63,000
Russian government distributions, mostly loans	<u>639,000</u>
Total	1,167,000

Russia itself was, thus, also coming to the rescue, a fact which has often been lost sight of in reports on the famine.

It is true that relatively small reliance can be placed on these "official" statements. It was a part of Soviet policy to place in the very best possible light any efforts it might make in behalf of the suffering peasants, and there are probably some duplications and much exaggeration in the figures; but even if we discount them by fifty per cent, we get a total of relief sent in by Russia itself, 580,000 tons, which is larger than the total donated by foreign organizations.

This reduced figure of 580,000 tons sent in by Russia, plus the 500,000 tons contributed by foreign organizations—a total of 1,080,000 tons—so far relieved the situation that by the early summer of 1922 reports of actual deaths from starvation practically ceased.

The number of deaths which meanwhile had occurred from actual starvation or from disease directly traceable to undernourishment was probably relatively small. Sufficient statistical data for any positive statement are lacking, but independent investigations made by the American Relief Administration's medical experts indicate a figure of about 2,000,000. This corresponds roughly with more recent Soviet government figures, based on a partial census in the autumn of 1920 and again on June 1, 1922, which show a loss of population in the drought regions between these two dates of 3,000,000, but which take no account of emigrations from those regions. As to the less dramatic but nevertheless equally serious results of the famine, in permanent though not fatal injury through undernourishment, especially among children, it is impossible in the present absence of organized data to do more than guess that the total number affected runs up into very high figures.

That deaths from disease following in the wake of famine were not far more numerous was due almost wholly to foreign donations of medicines, drugs, hospital equipment, etc. It is enough, here, merely to allude to the fact that Russia in 1921 was almost completely denuded of these necessities, and that it



Top: Children receiving their daily American food
 Center, left: Abandoned children at a railroad station
 Center, right: Leading his blind brother
 Bottom: He came 200 miles for something to eat

was through the generosity of the United States government and the American Red Cross that the American Relief Administration was able to distribute some \$8,000,000 worth of such supplies. The result was that by the summer of 1922 such diseases as typhus, typhoid, malaria, cholera, etc., which a few months before had developed to epidemic proportions, had been brought fully under control.

Another serious result of the famine was the loss of domestic animals. There had been some decline in their numbers even before the drought, as a result of the wars, though there are no very definite figures on the subject; but it was undoubtedly the drought that caused the most serious havoc. Many animals were slaughtered for food and many died of starvation. Probably an even larger number were driven off to more favored regions—west and northwest into Northern Ukraine and Central and Western Russia or east into the grazing lands of Asia. In many parts of the drought area animals all but totally disappeared, and for the region as a whole probably not over one-third remained. The loss not only still further lessened the ability of these sections of the country to feed themselves, but also seriously interfered with the possibility of agricultural recovery.

Serious as these losses were, however, it is easy to exaggerate their importance if we think only of the famine region itself. For Russia as a whole the losses were far less serious. In the first place the famine region, in normal times, possessed only about one-sixth of the grand total number of animals of the entire country; and, in the second place, many of the animals which disappeared from the drought area were merely transferred temporarily to other regions. The net results for the country as a whole, comparing the figures of a partial census in June 1922 with the official data for pre-war times, were a loss of ten per cent in cattle, twenty-three per cent in horses, thirty-three per cent in sheep and goats, and nineteen per cent in pigs. Such slaughterhouse statistics as exist indicate that there was also a considerable decline in average weight, especially in pigs.

Clearly, from many articles in the official and semi-official Moscow press, from public utterances and discussions, and from many conferences held to consider the disaster which had overtaken the country, the Soviet government had, by the middle of 1921, come to a full recognition of the fact that, although the drought was the immediate cause of the famine, a far deeper cause was the decline in cultivation, which in turn was due to the peasants' refusal to accept the communistic theory of the ownership of land and its products.

A change in policy began which was to have far-reaching consequences. In 1921 a decree was issued which virtually abandoned the doctrine that the entire produce of the farms belonged to the State. It was provided that all peasants who paid promptly and fully the requisitions levied against them should have freedom to dispose of any surplus in any manner they chose.

In the early spring of 1922 this first step was followed by a cutting down of the number of products subject to requisition, by some reduction of the quantity to be taken, a better organization of the methods and measures of assessment and collection, and a clearer definition of the limits of central and local taxing powers.

Far more significant, however, was another step taken in May 1922. It had been foreshadowed in the preceding December when a Congress of the Soviets had proclaimed the necessity for a "secure land possession conforming to local economic conditions."

The new law of May 1922 was a complete restatement of the "Fundamental Law of Land Possession." It began with a reiteration of the old phrases about the inviolability of the fundamental principle of land nationalization, reaffirming that the right to land ownership pertains exclusively to the State. It repeated the prohibition of the purchase or sale of land or the borrowing or lending on land mortgages. But then it proceeded to a complete abandonment of what, in the law of 1919, had been solemnly declared to be the fundamental

policies based on these general principles. The 1919 law, it will be remembered, had favored "large Soviet estates, rural communes, group agriculture, and all other forms of collective use of land." It had declared that "all forms of the individual use of the land should be regarded as merely temporary and doomed to destruction." The new decree reversed this. It proclaimed that the peasant must be left free to choose the form of land cultivation which he regards as most suitable. The land, though still in principle owned by the State, was given into the "perpetual hereditary possession" of the farmers, not, it is true, as individuals, but as families.

The right of possession could be forfeited only in the following cases:

a) If the entire family refused to accept the right.

b) If the family gave up farming.

c) If the family died out through failure of heirs.

d) If the family emigrated.

e) If one of certain types of criminal judgment were rendered against the family.

f) If the State found it necessary to exercise the right of state sovereignty.

The law of 1919, as we have seen, favored all forms of collective farming. The new law went back to a principle almost identical with that of the Stolypin laws of 1907-10 by granting facilities to individual families to escape from the bonds of the old "collective peasant society." It provided that, if, at the time of the general repartition of land in such a community, any family wished to withdraw, it might do so even against the will of the community, and must be given its share of the community land in a single separate piece which thereafter was to be excluded from the community land fund. It went even farther, by providing that such withdrawals might take place without waiting for the next general repartition if at any time it was demanded by one-fifth of the farms in any community having not more than a total of 250 farms; or by not less than 50 farms in any community of over 250 farms.

Furthermore, the new law made another step in the direction of freedom by permitting the leasing of farms under certain provisions designed to prevent abuse. In general, land might be leased:

a) If there were "temporary decay" of the farm owing to "elemental calamities."

b) If there were temporary lack of workers in the family.

c) If the lessees were in a position to cultivate with their own labor the full quantity of land leased.

d) If the period were short. (The law limited the term to three years, but provided for an extension to six years in unusual cases if recommended by the proper land authorities.)

Land might not be leased in any case if the possessing family gave up farming or emigrated.

The law of 1919 contained very definite and inelastic provisions concerning the hiring of labor. In general, hiring was permitted only on the Soviet estates, though some provision was made for temporary hiring on the other forms of collective farms in times of pressure of work. The new law was more elastic. It permitted hiring even by a single farm, though only as "subsidiary labor," when a family through lack of hands or implements would be unable otherwise to get essential work done in time, and then only on condition that all members of the family itself, as well as all the hired laborers, took part in the work. In addition, in those regions where there is much land in proportion to population, and in the organization or reorganization of farms in uncultivated or deserted areas, more permanent employment of hired labor was permitted to the extent to which it might be required by the best agricultural practice.

In short, the law was a distinct recognition of the individualistic tendencies of the mass of the peasants, coupled with a continued attempt to guard against any return to economic inequality in land possession. It sought, through limitation of lease, the prohibition of purchase, sale, and mortgage, the requirement that land shall be held only by those who till it

themselves, and the restrictions on the hiring of labor, to uphold the policy of the "equalized land possession" enunciated in 1918. The new system of land taxation, which was highly progressive in character, helped toward this same end of maintaining a "social equilibrium."

Socialization of the land and the food requisitions had by no means been the only things to which the peasant objected. Besides these, there had been added to his burdens during the period of experimentation a series of exactions of one sort or another, the chief among which was the so-called labor duty, which placed the farmer, his tools, his work-animals, and his carts at the disposal (often arbitrarily exercised) of the local Soviet authorities for all manner of "socially necessary" work. In addition, the central and local authorities were far from being in harmony in the matter of requisitions, and there were constant conflicts of authority, which frequently led to double requisitioning—by agents of the central government and those of the local governments—the peasant being crushed between the upper and the nether millstones.

Thus, in addition to a retreat from Socialist positions in the matter of forms of land possession, a right-about-face in the realm of taxation was forced on the government by the determined opposition of the peasants, and under the "New Economic Policy" a move in this direction soon began. The steps in retreat need be given here only in outline. The first move was to abandon the principle that the whole surplus product belonged to the State and to substitute taxation in kind in place of requisitioning, leaving the peasant who paid his tax fully, free to dispose of what he might have left over. Then came a granting of permission to the peasant to substitute one product for another (at fixed ratios) in the payment of the tax in kind, if it were more convenient for him to do so; then, freedom, in some instances, to commute the payment in kind into a money payment; then, the right, if he wished, to pay the whole tax in money; and, finally, the abandonment of the tax in kind and a full restoration of money payments.

Step by step other exactions likewise, such as the labor duties, were abandoned. The whole Socialist structure of taxation crumbled, and the State returned to a full-fledged system of money taxes, both direct and indirect, differing only in detail from that of pre-war days.

The effect of the reforms was immediate. Whether or no the details were altogether satisfactory, the mere substitution of any system in place of the more or less haphazard requisitions and of regularized individual land possession in place of the rather hazy collectivism was *per se* enough to bring favorable results. The inequalities between different sections of the country were partially, at least, removed; the farmer had more incentive to exert himself and was in a better position to make calculations as to the future. At any rate, the plantings for 1922-23 showed marked improvement over the preceding years, and the increase was largest in just those regions where the burdens of the Socialist experiment had been most keenly felt and resented. The area under cereals, for the first time since the revolution, showed a considerable increase (nearly 20 per cent), and came back nearly to the 1920-21 level. Since 1922-23 there has been still further improvement, until now the per capita sown area is not far below what it was before the war.

But even so, Russian agriculture is still far from being out of the woods. Assuming that the political factors which did so much to cause the ruin of farming have now been removed, there still remains the serious problem of what the peasant can do with whatever surpluses he may produce.

For four years, down to the adoption of the new economic policy, there had been steady deterioration, destruction, and decay of equipment, leaving a vacuum which could be filled but slowly even with industrial activity restored to normal; and such a restoration is far from having taken place. The peasant is still in pressing need of tools, machinery, fertilizers, general equipment, clothing, household goods, and the few luxuries he had been accustomed to in the old days. Russian estimates at

the close of 1923 put the deficit in a few of the chief articles at 4,000,000 plows, 50,000 seeders, 200,000 harvesters, and 440,000 threshers, and the aggregate value of equipment required to bring agriculture back to normal at \$2,000,000,000.

Since then there has been some improvement, but even yet a huge deficit exists and the farming population is getting but a fraction of the things it requires, not only in the way of equipment sufficient to enable it to continue production on an efficient plane but also in the matter of personal and household requirements. There are many evidences that the peasant still lacks not only the material means for maintaining his yield at its former level, but also the incentive to produce any large surplus. Before the war, the exportable surpluses of cereals reached a value, at present prices, of something over \$600,000,000 annually; now, only a fraction of that amount.

The farmer cannot obtain the things he wants within Russia itself for the simple reason that they do not exist there in sufficient quantity; and he cannot purchase abroad, for the government still maintains complete monopoly of foreign trade and is forced to use exportable surpluses for other purposes than the supply of things for the farmer. Mining, metallurgy, forestry, manufacturing, transportation, and other industries are all crying for reconstruction; and whatever credits can be created through a favorable trade balance must be devoted to a great variety of purposes, of which the satisfaction of the demands of the peasants is only one. The government is in this dilemma: it must either abandon the idea of maintaining an industrial state, and permit agriculture and other extractive enterprises to market their products in exchange for supplies; or it must so restore domestic manufactures that the extractive industries can get what they want within the country. They have, thus far, clung to the latter alternative and find themselves involved in a vicious circle. Agriculture (and the other extractive industries) cannot be adequately restored until the producers are given the incentive which comes with the ability to procure the things they demand in exchange for their sur-

pluses; they cannot procure these things (the foreign market, under the present policy, being closed to them) except by an enormous reconstruction of domestic industry; and domestic industry cannot be restored until the capital required for the purpose is made available through the export of huge agricultural (and other extractive) surpluses; and so on, around the circle.

In view of all these considerations, it looks very much as if there can be no hope of a permanent restoration of agriculture to anything like its pre-war productiveness until the economic policy of the government is further modified in such a way as to remove the barriers which prevent the peasant from getting foreign supplies and the factories from procuring foreign capital—a modification which may involve the abandonment of the industrial activities of the country to their fate until the extractive industries have first been fully restored.

II

RIGA TO SAMARA

(AUGUST 29—OCTOBER 2, 1921)

Riga, August 29, 1921, 10:00 P.M.—At last we, the second A.R.A. party, are off, after having had a rather exciting day and our first clash with the Bolshevik officials. They had promised our party a certain amount of space in their second-class Russian passenger car, and failed to deliver. After much talking and wasting of nervous energy, they gave us three coupés, into which we piled baggage, provisions, and the official supplies for the mission, and spread the blankets over them.

August 30.—We are moving slowly through Latvia and are watching the peasant women harvesting their crop with sickles. At some of the stations simple provisions are for sale. We passed trains filled with refugees coming from Moscow. About three o'clock as we crossed the Latvian frontier into Russia, some of us felt as if we had burned our bridges behind us. The Soviet diplomatic courier, who is on the train, took charge of our passports, said the right words to the customs officials, and we had not the least unpleasantness; but we are suspicious nevertheless.

August 31.—The country we traveled through today was as fertile as that of yesterday, but the buildings were more dilapidated. Though our train is light, the locomotive has much difficulty with it; once or twice it could not make the grade and had to back down and get up steam before trying again. We reached Moscow about four o'clock, two hours late, and were met by Phil Carroll and one or two other members of the first party, who had preceded us by a couple of days. Carroll and his men were discouraged and we were not long in giving in to that mood.

The destructive effects of the war and the revolution are all about. The railway sidings are crowded with worn-out locomo-

tives and broken-down cars, the railway yards are prowling places for starving men and hungry dogs, and the railway station is in neglect and confusion, full of sickly, ragged, and famishing refugees with the look of despair and death on their faces. On the streets are heaps of refuse, the accumulation of two or three years; and off the streets are tumble-down houses, the doors and woodwork having been turned into fuel and the lower floors into public toilets. There were few vehicles about, and these kicked up clouds of dust as they zig-zagged along to escape the ruts and holes. We drove two or three miles through the city, from the station to our headquarters, and I do not recall seeing a half-dozen open shops. There were comparatively few people on the street, and they looked ragged and lifeless.

The quarters set aside for us, a huge building, formerly the palace of an oil king, is full of dirt and empty of furniture. It has not even running water or the ordinary conveniences. Fortunately we have brought cots and blankets, so that we can keep off the floor and make ourselves comfortable for the night. Two of us started out in search of food and walked ourselves tired before, by mistake, we found a place and persuaded the woman in charge to give us a simple meal, for which she charged us the equivalent of one dollar and fifty cents.

September 1, Midnight.—Another day full of trouble, hard work, and worry. In view of the reports of suffering on the Volga, Carroll has asked John Gregg, Bill Shafroth, and me to go down the river to investigate. He secured the promise of the Soviet authorities that arrangements would be made for our going, but as the day wore on we had no means of telling whether we should start today or a month from today. There were enough liaison officers about, at the head of whom was Tovarisch Volodin, but they could not tell us anything definite. It was necessary to run to Kamenev's office, and there we were told that Volodin had just been in, and when we saw Volodin he said he did not know, because Tovarisch Wolff had the matter in hand. When at eight o'clock in the evening we left

our headquarters for the station, we were told that our car was on the siding to receive our baggage and supplies and that we should get away at ten o'clock; but when we reached the siding no car was there and no one knew where it was. We had decided to take a Ford with us, and a flat car and a chauffeur were promised; but neither of these was in sight. Volodin ran off to telephone, Wolff went to talk to the station agent, some other official set out in search of a chauffeur. To make a long story short, we got away at midnight, Ford, chauffeur, and all. In our second-class car, which is not too clean, are John, Bill, and I, of our party; and a *tovarisch* [representative of the Soviet—to act as liaison officer and to make reports on us], two porters, and the chauffeur.

September 2.—When we got up this morning the rain was pouring down, and the country looked like some parts of northern Idaho in the rainy season. There are large tracts of untilled land, but the part that is under cultivation seemed to be well taken care of. There was little food at the stations and that little was expensive, and the farther we went from Moscow, the dearer it became. In the morning we paid 3,500 rubles for a pound of black bread and in the afternoon 4,000 (about 8 cents in American money).

September 3, 10:00 A.M.—We arrived at Kazan at ten o'clock this morning. In and about the station are a great many refugees who had been brought here from the Russo-German front in 1915, and who had since found a home in the villages of Kazan and Ufa, but are now, because of the famine, trying to make their way back to their original home. They have come as far as this station and cannot proceed for lack of train facilities which the government has promised but cannot provide. While waiting, these poor people, already weakened by famine, live out in the open, exposed to the rain, heat, and cold, which sap their vitality still more. One poor woman came to see us and said that her husband and eldest son had died during the war and that she with the younger members of the family had been sent to Kazan where she lived in one of the

villages. Lately the natives of that village had departed for Siberia, leaving her with the other poor refugees to shift for themselves. There was nothing for them to do but start for their old home, and they have come this far, keeping themselves alive somehow. I asked her what her nationality was and she replied, with tears in her eyes, that she did not know; at one time she was a Russian, but was recently informed that she is a Pole, but would rather be a Russian.

Across the tracks from the station we found natives of Kazan villages huddled together in compact masses like a seal colony, mothers and young close together. They are underfed; some show it more than others. The children are receiving daily a bit of soup and a small piece of bread from the public kitchens. Many of them look very sickly indeed and we saw one boy who was in a dying condition, but his mother finally got him on his feet and walked off with him. Some of these refugees have been here for a considerable time, and according to reports, the number before us is only one-third of what were here a month ago; the other two-thirds have died, or wandered off. This statement is confirmed by one of our porters, who described the tragic scenes of a few weeks back when people, like wounded animals, crawled into corners to die, while others who were too feeble to do that fell on the street, too weak even to eat the lump of bread that he offered them.

One bright little chap who came to our car said that he was a Russian from Grodno and that his father is in Germany, probably a prisoner of war, and that he and his mother and the little brother here have nothing to eat.

We left the station and went into the city of Kazan, which sprawls over a vast plain and is dirty and unattractive. What a change, what a ghost of its former self! Rusty tracks and dangling wires indicate that the city had at one time a street-car system, and shabby signs over ruined buildings tell the story of banks, theaters, and shops that are no more. All that is left of that period of hustle and bustle is a window here and there containing bits of jewelry, cast-off finery, and ladies' hats of

the antebellum days. The people we met today were pitiful-looking figures dressed in rags and begging for a piece of bread in the name of Christ.

In the Tartar quarter the misery is not so striking. Here we found a bazaar where meat or black bread can be had for 4,000 rubles a pound, but white bread cost three times as much. The poor women who have never before counted even in hundreds are now quite bewildered by the thousands. In one place we noticed a bright lad running from one peasant woman to another helping out in making change.

In the course of the day we met the officers of the Tartar Republic, all of whom are of Tartar origin. At first they were a bit suspicious, for they had been warned against us, but little by little they warmed up, especially when we got to talking about schools. Most of them have been teachers before becoming commissars, and when they learned that I was a member of the schoolmaster fraternity they knew just where to place me. They asked all kinds of questions about our educational system and told us some of their problems. The fact that I could talk to them without an interpreter and unobserved by a tovarisch helped out wonderfully. In the course of our stay in Kazan we became good friends and we learned later from our men who followed us that it was easier to get along with the Tartars than with the Russian officials in the other Volga guberniias. The Tartars took us around to the hospitals and public eating-places, where long lines of children were waiting their turn to be fed. One of these kitchens is supported by the central government and the people in charge of it were sent from Moscow. There is a great deal of co-operation between the local and the central governments, probably because the heads of both are Communists and because just now the local governments are dependent on the central for their daily bread.

September 4.—Last evening before we took leave of our Tartar friends they suggested that we go down the river to Bogorodsk and other points where the famine situation is bad, and left it to us to decide whether to start during the night or

early in the morning. As we are anxious to get the relief work going as soon as possible, we told them that we would go just as early as they would take us. It was then agreed that we should meet at the station at one o'clock in the morning. We were at the right place, and at the right time, but they were not. For over an hour we waited in the cold and damp air, for there was no other shelter than the dirty, lousy station full of sickly refugees. Finally the auto appeared, and off we went on a six-mile drive to the Volga, and the ship. This large river boat has seen better days, but is now in a very shabby condition inside and out. Our Tartar friends, in oriental style, offered us the choice of cabins, and we, after taking a look at them, declined in occidental style and stretched out on the hard wooden benches in the large room, where there was more air and fewer vermin. For some reason or other the boat did not start before five-thirty in the morning.

The Volga, hereabouts, is a broad stream flowing between two low banks. Occasionally, however, one or the other of the banks rises to a height of one or two hundred feet. There is not much scenery to thrill over, and the villages that come in view are in no way different from many others of their kind that we have seen in other parts of Russia. At eleven-thirty o'clock, we had come to anchor for about an hour, because ahead of us a boat was aground and blocked the channel.

Bogorodsk is on the north bank of the Volga. For one hundred yards or more the bank slopes gradually toward the river, and all this beach is covered with living beings, most of them Tartars. Families are lying on their hastily constructed platforms, about two feet off the ground, roofed over with blankets, hides, or sacks. All these people are underfed and ill; many of them are in a state of stupor, indifferent to what happens to them. Women surrounded us and wept over their miserable lot, and the death of their children. We went into the hospital and saw tiny tots lying four in a cot, and the poor things were mere skeletons with just a breath of life in them.

We turned from this nightmare and drove inland to visit

the villages, passing peasant carts on the way to receive the grain seed given by the government. The first village we came to was inhabited by Russians, but only half of the population was there; the other half had gone, no one knew where. As soon as the famine became a certainty, the peasant piled his family into a cart and set out for Siberia, for the Ukraine, for Turkestan, anywhere to escape death. I went into one home and talked with the mother; she told me that she has eight children and that the only food she gives them is grass bread, of which she offered us a taste, and the milk of two or three sheep. The children can hardly stomach the bread because it gives them a pain, and yet the gnawing of the hunger forces them to eat it. We heard similar stories from other inhabitants in the village.

From this settlement we went to another in which Tartars lived. They are on the whole worse off than the Russians, for the latter raise vegetables to supplement their meat and bread diet, and the former do not—at least not to the same extent. In this village, too, half the population is gone. Most of the children have distended stomachs indicating famine conditions. We were given pieces of the grass bread, which looked repulsive and tasted bitter. We were assured by the men that the seed which is being given them is planted and not used for eating; this is hardly credible, but I think most of them told the truth. When they were informed that the Americans would come to feed their children, the men took off their hats and expressed gratitude.

We had intended leaving Bogorodsk for Titiushi about five o'clock, but it was almost seven before we got away. Our guides assured us that it would take us until nine o'clock to reach our destination, but it was eleven before we docked. Titiushi is situated on a high mountain and looked a long distance off from where we were. Three droshkas waited for us, and Gregg, Shafroth, and I squeezed into one. The road, which winds along the side of the mountain, is very steep, very narrow, and poorly laid out. When we reached the top, our horses began to show off, rushing through the dark and uneven streets at a

frightful speed in spite of the "*tbu*" of the driver. We finally pulled alongside of the hospital, where we met the chief of the district, who gave us the information asked for. At midnight we started down the mountain, with two of the wheels locked. Even then the droschka went down at an uncomfortable speed. As we neared the end, the driver lost the road and we got off and walked the rest of the way to the ship.

September 5.—We went to sleep on the hard benches, and when we woke at seven we were in sight of Bogorodsk and steaming toward Kazan. In the course of the morning, I had a talk with two of the chauffeurs and the engineer of the ship. They say that one of the causes of the hunger is of course the dry spell, and the other is the requisitioning by the government during the last two years. It took from the peasant all that he raised so that at the end of the season he either had no seed for sowing or refused to put it in, knowing that the crop would be taken from him. As to the form of government in Russia, these men do not seem to be interested one way or the other; they are chiefly concerned with getting something to eat.

We reached Kazan about three in the afternoon, and at once went to our car, which was surrounded by begging children and wailing parents. They kept looking up at our windows so that we could neither eat nor rest.

Most of the refugees that we saw yesterday have been removed to a concentration camp to be taken care of until sent to another part of the empire. Today a trainload of children started for Petrograd and another for Kherson. I am informed that the Russo-Polish refugees will be sent on their way in a few days. The government is discouraging migration in so far as it can do so. No one is allowed to leave his village without first securing a permit, and those who travel in carts are stopped at the river crossings or other places as they come through. Of the five thousand refugees at Bogorodsk only about one hundred and fifty had received authorization to go farther. The very fact that it is difficult to get permission is discouraging many people from moving at all.



A Tartar-Russian boy leaving an A.R.A. kitchen with his daily food

The food question is becoming more and more serious from day to day. We are told that government employees will no longer receive their bread rations, and that letters have been received from Moscow not to count on government support in the near future, even for children's homes. The local authorities are making noble efforts to save the situation.

The chauffeur of our Ford engaged me in political conversation today. He claims that the central power at Moscow is all right, but that the local functionaries, who, he said, are not in sympathy with Moscow, are sabotaging. But he looks forward to the time when the Soviet will train up its own staff of honest and efficient helpers in sympathy with its ideals.

We had a call from a Russian who seemed to be highly educated, and who wanted to have European news. He was particularly anxious to know what had become of the Tsar, whose fate is as yet unknown in Kazan. He is bitterly opposed to the present régime and lays on it the blame for the present misfortune of Russia. He expressed a wish that a foreign power may intervene and establish a republic. When we asked if he desired the restoration of the old monarchy he replied with an emphatic "No!"

September 6.—We visited a number of children's homes today. In one only sick children, recommended by a doctor, are taken (those who are too ill to come have their portions taken to them by their parents); but in the other homes, supposedly well children are cared for, and their allowance is much more meager than that of the sick. This differentiation into sick and well at a time when all are underfed leads to accusations of graft and favoritism.

September 7.—About nine o'clock last evening, after we had settled down to work, we received a dinner invitation from the Prime Minister of the Tartar Socialist Soviet Republic. His automobile waited for us, and a quarter of an hour later we sped through the dirty, rutty street, knocking down a droshka and spilling the occupants. When we arrived at the home of His Excellency, he was away at one of the numerous soviet meet-

ings; but his wife did the honors, assisted by the Minister of Agriculture and Mr. Kazak of the Children's Bureau. We could not eat much, but we did our best with the fourteen per cent wine and other refreshments. The eating was spiced with the conversations of the Minister of Agriculture, who dwelt on the virtues of the Tartar Socialist Soviet Republic and the evils of the old régime. We broke away just in time to make the eleven-fifty-five train for Simbirsk.

The rest of the night until six in the morning was spent in preparing a report for the Moscow office, which we sent by one of our porters. We had just got through when our coach was side-tracked, while the main train with our courier proceeded toward Moscow. Our car was cold, and we were glad to turn in to keep warm.

Early in the afternoon Bill and I took a look around. We were at the station of Kanashz—a Tartar name, formerly Shikhran. We went to the market place, where we saw plenty of food; bread is sold for 4,000 rubles the pound, while meat, cheese, butter, and vegetables are equally dear or cheap, as you look at it. Meat costs less than bread (we bought mutton for 3,500 the pound), which in itself indicates a famine condition.

Our presence attracted attention, and when we came to a stop a small crowd gathered, among others two militiamen and a soldier of the Red Army. The militia complained that they have not had any bread or any pay or anything else for two months, and that their only food is soup (grain cooked in water) once a day. They showed us and gave us a piece of the bread they made for themselves out of grass and acorns, which looked like a piece of horse manure. The soldier said that he is now detailed to work on the railway line and receives a pound of bread a day, a little sugar, salt, fish, and 900 rubles a month. Not one of the three men can free himself from the service, but has to go on until released by the authorities. Another man joined us, and he also complained of the hard times. He works part time for the government, receiving seventeen pounds of bread a

month and during the remainder of his time he works as carpenter; between these two jobs and with the fruit of his garden he manages to feed his five children. He blames the Bolsheviks for the hard times and claims that it was much better under the Tsar. He also said that the Russian people are tired and exhausted, without power of resistance and can be driven about by anybody.

These four men informed us that in this part of the world from three to eight pounds of seed have been distributed for each peasant and member of his family for next year's crop (nine puds, or 324 pounds, are needed for a desiatin), which is a drop in the bucket. At the present time the people are suffering, but will suffer much more later in the year when the small amounts of potatoes, acorns, and grass are consumed.

We had a talk with another group of men, one of whom told me that last year he had ninety puds of grain, sixty of which the government took from him. On the thirty puds which were left him he and his family lived until recently, but now it is all consumed. He works in the railway shops and receives in payment half a pound of bread a day and 2,000 rubles a month. This and a few potatoes are all that he has for his family of four. Another man complained that he had been sent from his village to work in the railway shops at this station, but as he has received no food for three days he is going home. A third man stated that in his village the people mix twenty pounds of crushed dry clay with ten pounds of flour and out of this mixture make bread; others use sawdust, leaves, and acorns for bread. Several laughed at the idea that the peasants are sowing and not eating the few pounds of seed grain that the government has given them.

About eight-thirty our car was attached to another train and we were again moving.

September 8, 1:00 P.M.—Arrived at the station Krasni Uzel, Penza guberniia. As we had to wait several hours, Gregg and I took a walk into the village. On the way we stopped to have a talk with a peasant who told us that there is a

local crop shortage. So far the government has not furnished the peasants with any seed, and therefore only twenty-five to fifty per cent of the average yearly seeding has gone in. The speaker laid the blame for the tragic situation on the climate, and on the present political and social situation of Russia. This year, he said, the famine is worse than in 1891. Then the Russian government was in friendly relation with the rest of the world, but now it is not; then the government had agronomists and weather bureaus to keep the people posted on the crop prospects, but now it has not. He intimated that the policy of requisitioning has demoralized the peasant, who sees no object in saving for the future. He preferred to dispose of his surplus underhandedly or to turn it into vodka. On the whole he was very pessimistic about the present government and recalled the good old days.

We left him and wandered a little deeper into the village. On the way we met two long-bearded peasants, who stopped to chat. They told us that they were from a neighboring village where the harvest is no better than in the one we are in. The people have enough potatoes and cabbage to last two or three months, and after that they will kill the live stock for food. The government is not supplying a single grain of seed and therefore only a small part of their land is seeded. The late summer rain has revived some of the half-dead roots, but the early cold will prevent the grain from maturing. Our two peasants were becoming quite eloquent about the present evils when all of a sudden they stopped: "We do not know who you are," they said; "you may be spies or perhaps someone may be listening to us. One has to be careful." With this remark they broke off conversation and departed.

On our way back to the car we looked into the *agitatsionni punkt* [reading-room], where we saw plenty of propaganda pamphlets but nothing else.

September 9.—We left last night at six, and when we woke this morning we were at a standstill at the station of Sura (Penza), because of a head-on collision between a passenger

train and a freight train some distance ahead. The Tartars with whom we talked said that the peasants of the neighboring Russian villages have taken a good deal of *barski zemlia* [land of the nobles], which is of a better quality than the land which they (Tartars) had, and therefore the Russians have better crops. When *barski zemlia* was offered to the Tartars they refused.

We talked with some of the people about their attitude toward the church and religion. They were agreed that the young people are wandering away from the church, but that the old still cling to it, and that owing to the famine more people pray this year than last.

Someone raised the question as to what day in the month it was, and this led to the discussion of the comparative value of the old and the new calendars. There was a consensus of opinion that those who planted according to the old style got crops and those according to the new did not.

In an empty box car right across the track were a number of peasants from Simbirsk carefully guarding their sacks of potatoes (which they had recently acquired in exchange for salt) and waiting for a chance to steal a ride. They had tales of woe to relate.

The engineer of our train tells us that he has never before been over this section; that he has taken this train of thirty oil tanks from Ivan Woznisenski. If he should succeed in bringing it back, he and the other members of the train crew will receive twenty-eight yards of cloth, which they will exchange for flour. Although it takes two weeks to make the round trip, this run is so much sought after that the train crews take turns. But the best run of all is into the Ukraine, for from such a trip a number of puds of flour may be brought back.

For the bad state of affairs he blames the Russian people, including the present government, and compares it to a shepherd starting to drive his flock over a trail he has not been over. He said that at one time he had been a Communist, but became dissatisfied and left the party (Tovarisch reports that he had been kicked out), and since then he has been looked upon with

suspicion. While we were talking, his assistant, an intelligent young man, joined us, and remarked that Russia will return to a government of the Kerenski type but never to a monarchy. In reply to the question whether the Russians in Russia expect any help from the *émigrés*, they said that owing to the fact that they have no newspapers from abroad they do not know what the *émigrés* have to offer. They remarked that the peasants are indifferent as to the form of government so long as they have enough to eat. Europe, they claimed, must come to the aid of Russia; but this cannot be until Russia has a government that can be trusted.

One of the wrecked trains brought in a large number of people. A man from Turkestan stated that the crop there is only medium and in some parts not even that. Another man, from Siberia, reported that in the western provinces the crop is not very good, but farther to the east it is much better; and that thousands of refugees from Russia are held up in the Siberian stations and cannot proceed farther because of lack of transportation and food.

A passenger from Samara, who talked French and seemed a man of education, has a list of nineteen different kinds of bread which the natives of Samara are making out of grass, roots, clay, and such stuff. He began to copy the list but got as far as the fourth item when the train started. There were girl students from Ufa, on their way to Moscow to study medicine, who stated that the famine situation in Ufa is worse than anywhere else because that city is off the main line. There were the usual speculators selling salt, coarse homespun linen, etc.

I went out on the car platform to talk with the peasant women. One of them has lost her husband in the war, another has lost her brother (who escaped from the Bolos and joined the Czechs), and a third says she is an old maid because so many men have been killed in the war that there is no man left for her.

They inquired if I knew what became of the Tsar and whether the report of his coming back was true. "Formerly,"

said one woman, "when there was hunger the Tsar managed somehow to get us bread, but now there is no one to look after us." Another woman added, rather bitterly: "The peasant wanted *svoboda* [freedom], and he got it. It serves him right; it will teach him a lesson. The Soviet is the work of the devil. For three years the Bolsheviks have taken everything from us; now they have stopped, because there is nothing more to take."

In discussing the change in the life of the village during the Soviet régime they brought out the fact that before the war girls married at sixteen and seventeen, the men at eighteen, but now it is twenty and even twenty-five. Many women now leave their husbands and go to live with other men, which was not done formerly. Others have a civil marriage "like the Jews." This kind of life they do not approve. In their village there are schools and kindergartens, but no religion is taught, only singing and dancing. One of the women related that when she was in Siberia recently the grown-up girls were compelled to go to night school, where they remained until ten o'clock. When they came out, there were always a number of young men to take them home. "But they did not learn very much."

Late in the afternoon I had a talk with a member of the train crew, a trained mechanic. He is a strong supporter of the Soviet and claims that it has the backing of the majority of the Russian people, including the peasants. He justifies the past acts and present policies of the Communists on the ground of necessity and revolution. To the question why, since a majority of the people are for the Soviet, it does not call a Constituent Assembly, he replied that it is not necessary because the Soviet already represents the majority.

September 10.—The wreck held us up until 8:00 P.M., when we got under way again, reaching Inza near eleven. Our car was attached to another train, hauling seed grain to Simbirsk, which pulled out about one o'clock. At eight in the morning the train was standing still. I looked out of the window and saw before me beautiful meadows and woodland pastures covered with a coating of frost, that sparkled under the rays of the

sun just as in our own Mississippi Valley. After dressing I went out of the car and discovered that the flat car, on which was our automobile, had on it about a dozen or more new passengers, mostly peasant women. They are 300 versts from home, came a week ago to buy potatoes, and are now working their way back with their loads. In Simbirsk, they said, the crops are a failure and everybody will die this winter. They take their fate as a matter of course, and talk about it calmly except when referring to the Soviet, which they blame for a great many of their misfortunes. "Russia is without a master and therefore everything is bad." They accused the Soviet officials of stealing and robbing. I reminded them that the officials of the Tsar also stole. "Yes, they did, but then we had so much that we did not notice it, and they always left us enough to live." They complained of the schools, which, instead of teaching the children religion, teach them to dance (kindergarten). Civil marriage also came in for attack, and they named a number of children who have been placed in an unfortunate position because of these marriages. When I told them that the A.R.A. plans feeding in Simbirsk, they said, "For God's sake, do not hand the food over to the officials, but distribute it yourself." The hunger is so great in Simbirsk, they said, that some mothers have abandoned their children in the market place, while others have killed them and then committed suicide.

I asked them a straight question whether they would seed or eat the grain which the government was giving them, and there was little unanimity in their answers. They have been promised eight pounds of seed to a "soul," but are not quite sure that they will really get anything. During the last few weeks there have been a number of train wrecks, particularly seed trains, and they somehow have got it into their heads that evil fate is pursuing them.

I divided a cake of chocolate among the women, and each put away her little portion to take home to the children. To the men I gave cigarettes, which are a treat to them, for at the

present time they smoke locally grown tobacco, known as *ma-khorka*, coarsely cut up and made into cigarettes with newspapers or corn husks.

The men, like the women, blame the Bolsheviks. A man from Samara cursed the officials because they will not allow the famished people to depart, though they accept bribes for permits to leave. They got into an argument among themselves as to the kind of government they would like to have. The great majority were in favor of the Tsar, but a few stood out for a bourgeois republic, like America. I doubt very much if they have a clear idea of the meaning of these terms.

When the train started I mounted the platform, which was next to the engine, and rode with the peasant passengers to the next station. The locomotive burned wood, and when it got up speed hot sparks fell on us and set fire to the clothes and sacks of the poor people.

About one o'clock we came to a standstill in the Simbirsk freight yard, two or three miles from the town. Hoping that our car and platform would be moved nearer the city, all the sackers from the other parts of the train climbed on our front platform car. Some of them, bent double under their heavy loads, kept repeating, "*Vot nam svoboda!*" ["This is freedom!"] "We cheered, we clapped our hands," some continued, "and here we are dying of hunger and going hundreds of versts for a sack of potatoes and carrying it on our backs. We drove off the *pomeschik* [landlord], we plundered his house, putting his pictures and mirrors into our cow barns, we divided his land; and what is the result? We are famishing, the land is untilled, and the country is becoming a graveyard. Fools, we Russians are; we are not fit for freedom. God has turned his face from us, and the civilized world regards us as unclean, as the children of the devil. It is a good thing we are dying. We get what we deserve. Svoboda! Svoboda!"

2:00 P.M.—Pulled into Simbirsk station and had our car side-tracked. *Tovarisch* called up the leaders of the local soviet, who came for us a couple of hours later and took us to

headquarters, where we met most of the commissars. They are all young men in the twenties, except the chief, who is perhaps in his early thirties. At least half of them seem to be of non-Russian origin; none of them give the impression of much education, great intelligence, or high character, and our dealings with them later have not made us change our mind. They are neither serious-minded nor reliable, considering the importance of their position and the gravity of the situation. They are not the kind of men who would occupy responsible positions in other countries.

The statistics we had telegraphed for were not ready and would not be ready until the next day. We asked to be shown some of the children's homes and other public institutions; but there was no auto, for the chauffeur had decided to quit. However, a little later he appeared again and we started. The first place we visited was a "receiving home," where the children are taken from the street, cleaned up, and temporarily cared for, before being sent to other homes or to other parts of Russia. One trainload of children has already been sent from here to Novgorod and another will soon go to Witebsk. At present the number of children in the home is six hundred, with many others clamoring to get in. Already three and four sickly children sleep in one cot and under one blanket. We saw one pitiful case of two Tartar children, about five and three years of age, who did not understand a word of Russian, and when the nurse, who could not talk Tartar, tried to separate them to feed them, they clung to each other and wept most piteously, as if she were doing them harm. Most of the children are orphans, having lost one or both parents. Here, as elsewhere in the famished region, it is quite common for mothers to take their children to the market square or to the doors of children's homes and leave them.

From this "receiving home" we went to "children's homes." Altogether in the city of Simbirsk 21,000 children receive each a small chunk of coarse black bread and some watery soup in these homes and schools. All the children are undernour-

ished, but it is no longer a question of undernourishment, but of starvation; for we were informed that there is food on hand to last only five days. The more we see of these institutions the more we become convinced that those in charge are worthy of praise.

In one of these schools we met a young lady who seemed to be of gentle birth and refinement. She had studied in Petrograd and in a certain institute which, if I am not mistaken, was for the daughters of the nobility. She apologized for her poor French because since 1917 she has had no opportunity to speak it. She seemed to be quite ignorant of what is going on not only in the world at large but even in Russia. When I related certain events and named a number of Russians of prominence who had died, she seemed astonished and kept exclaiming "*Bozhi moi! Bozhi moi!*" ["My God! My God!"] She said that she has not seen anybody from the outside world for four years and that our coming has dazed her. Our last visit for the day was in the hospital, which we found full of sick people, empty of food and medical supplies.

Before we took leave of our guides it was agreed that on the morrow at nine-thirty in the morning, an auto with one official in charge will come to take us to see a few villages and the town of Sengilei on the Volga. We raised the question whether we should take our Ford, but the Russians advised us not to do so because they have no gasoline for it. In order that we might be prompt we set our watches to agree with their Simbirsk time, for in this city there are three kinds of time—Moscow, railroad, and Simbirsk. The soviet in its efforts to be efficient and carry out the daylight-saving plan, has gone ahead of all other states. The difference in time between Moscow and Riga during the month of August was three hours. A day's work begins soon after daylight and, so far as I can understand the mind of those in authority, it is arranged so that there should always be plenty of light to work by. But there is no work.

September 11 (Sunday).—At nine-thirty our party was ready, but we waited an hour before the Russians appeared, and

when they did they told us that there was plenty of gasoline for the Ford. To make a long story short it was one o'clock and not ten when we left Simbirsk.

While waiting at the garage the workmen asked questions. What does the world think of Soviet Russia? Does it think the Russians are a lot of wild men? Does it make fun of them? and such questions. They also desired to know about the labor situation in Europe and America, and their conversation indicated, though not clearly, that they think the class struggle outside of Russia to be much sharper than it really is.

Our conversation drifted to everyday affairs, which, in this part of the world, is bread. All complained that hunger threatens to kill them this winter, that no one can live on his monthly pay of 3,000 rubles or some such sum, now that the *paiok* [ration] has been cut off. Whether a person likes it or not he has to speculate in food and sell the few things he has. If a person refuses to work for the State he is regarded as a deserter and arrested.

The chaussée was in ruins, so that our cars were obliged to follow trails recently made alongside the telephone poles or across plowed fields. After passing through two villages we came, about four o'clock, to the third, Tushna. This community has a population of 6,000, of whom about 2,000 are children up to the age of seventeen. In many other places that we have visited the proportion of children to adults is higher than the average, which is due, according to the explanation of the local authorities, to the war and the revolution. This explanation is in large part confirmed by statistics of the Simbirsk government, which show that the number of girls is only slightly larger than that of boys, while among the adults the difference in the sexes is considerable.

We went on to Sengilei, the chief city of the uiezd Sengilei, one of the three worst famine uiezds (the other two being Syzran and Simbir) in the guberniia of Simbirsk; and, after losing our way, we finally reached our destination about six o'clock. This day being Sunday and John the Apostle's Day,

the villagers were out on the street and the autos had some difficulty in making their way among the sheep, cows, and excited children. We halted in front of the office of the local soviet, a building which formerly served as a theater. A band played inside, not in our honor, however, but to attract people to a lottery going on. A number of objects were on display—huge pumpkins, heads of cabbage, also less material and more artistic things. We tried our luck at two thousand rubles per and lost.

When the presiding officer of the local soviet arrived on the scene, we went into session. He told us that this year in Sengilei uiezd, the average yield per desiatin was two and one-fourth puds (being five puds less than the amount of seed put in), not enough to feed either man or beast. In January 1921 the uiezd had 24,000 horses and of this number half have survived; the other half have died or have been traded off for bread. The horses are now living on such pasture as they can pick up and on tree leaves, but the wind and the snow will soon cover these and then more horses, cows, and sheep will be traded off for bread or killed.

The complaining human beings were no better off than the dumb animals. We were shown sixteen kinds of bread, made of grasses, leaves, acorns, and such things. About 5,000 people have been sent away to other parts of Russia where food is more plentiful, and if transportation were to be had more would go. This undernourishment and improper nourishment is breaking the health of the community, already weakened by the malaria that is so deadly in this part of the Volga. The infantile death rate is particularly high. The medical authorities assured us, and we give their figures without comment, that in normal years, out of 1,000 children up to the age of three, 349 die, and out of every 1,000 children up to the age of five, 494 die. The war and the famine, bringing in their train typhus, cholera, and other diseases, have put these figures to shame. Of typhus cases which come under the physicians' care, thirty-three per cent die; of cholera cases, forty per cent. Those who recover

now will, under the present pitiful conditions, succumb later. For fall seeding the uiezd requires nearly 500,000 puds of grain; the government has promised 279,000 puds, but has sent only 140,000, and today is St. John's Day, which the peasants consider the end of seeding time. The Soviet in Moscow seems to be doing its best; the local soviets are making brave efforts; the peasants spare no labor—some even go so far as to put in every grain of seed by hand—to get a crop next year; but all these will not avail.

The chairman of the local soviet, Prytkov, impresses us as an honest man who recognizes the responsibility that is on him. He was kind enough to invite us to tarry and take some refreshment, but owing to the late hour, the bad roads, and the uncertainty of the performance of our Fords, we were obliged to decline the invitation and start for Simbirsk. The return was uneventful, with the exception that the car of the Simbirsk tovarischi ran away from us and we had to trail it in the dark. When we reached our railway car it was just midnight and, much to our joy, our porters had a big pot of hot *sch*i [cabbage soup]. It was the first cooked meal we have had for three days.

September 12.—Last night when we took leave of the members of the local soviet, they promised to call for us at ten-thirty, but it was noon before they came. We went to the office of the chairman of the *gubispolkom* [soviet executive committee of the guberniia] and from him secured whatever data we need. He is more efficient than the other members of the government with whom we came in contact in the city of Simbirsk. The situation in the whole guberniia is about as gloomy as in the uiezd of Sengilei.

In January 1921 the population of the Simbirsk guberniia was estimated at about 1,700,000, of whom a little more than a million and a half lived in the country and the remainder in cities, of which the city of Simbirsk with 80,000 is the largest. The population is made up of many nationalities—Russians, Tartars, Chuvach, Mordvin, Estonians, and Jews. During the "German" war, as the people of this part of the world speak

of the conflict of 1914 to distinguish it from the "Civil" war that followed, many Poles, Lithuanians, and Letts from the "Eastern Front" were transported to this part of the Volga; and these refugees are now trying to make their way back as fast as transportation is furnished them.

The city of Simbirsk, situated on the banks of the Volga, spreads over a large plain, and like other cities in Russia through which we have passed, is dilapidated and going to ruins. Its show windows are smashed, and through them one sees evidence of former wealth. Its population is in rags, and one looks in vain for a bit of color to brighten this gloomy picture. The sight of a neatly and attractively dressed woman is so rare that we turn our eyes to behold. To one who has been in Russia before and remembers the beautiful women, the hospitality of the Russian people, the gayety and sparkle of the social life, present-day Russia gives the impression of a dying nation.

After dinner our party of three took a walk in the freight yard near the warehouses. On the way we passed a number of peasants, all of whom raised their hats, and one of whom spoke up. He wanted to know who we were and why we came. When we answered his questions they all expressed gratification but bemoaned the fact that Russia, the granary of Europe, should have come to such a deplorable state. This led them to criticize and attack bitterly the Bolsheviks and to put the responsibility of the famine on their shoulders, charging them with the merciless plundering of the peasants last year which has brought on the present woes. Before I realized it I was defending the Soviet and pointing out that the suffering of the Russian people is due to the "German" and especially to the "Civil" war; that the Soviet is distributing grain for seeding; and that as soon as that is done it will take up the question of feeding the people. They admitted the evil consequences of the wars but made light of the distribution of grain and placed no confidence in the promise of help. "The Soviet knows how to take but not how to give," was their reply. As they continued to abuse the powers that be and sing the praises of the powers

that were, I put a straight question to them: "Would you like to go back to the Nikolai régime?" Most of them remained silent; one said that to go back to tsarism was out of the question; another kept harping on the theme of how much better off he was in the old days. I then said to them that they had to admit that the Soviet gave them better schooling facilities. Some admitted it, but one man would not go even that far. "When I was a boy," he said, "I went three years to the village school and learned to read and write. During the last three years I have sent my little girl to school, and what has she learned? To sing the 'International' and to dance." He accompanied his speech with gestures of a kindergarten sort. Failing to make an impression this way I tried another tack and said, "You have no right to complain against the present government; it helped you to get some of the pomeschik land?" This remark was like the waving of a red flag before an enraged bull: "What did we peasants know? We are oxen; we are fools. Agitators came and told us that the land belonged to us and that we ought to take it, and we followed them like sheep. Now we have land, no work, and no food."

I discouraged any more conversation in this direction and led it back to the question of help which is coming to them in order to explode their idea that in two months more they will all die. They asked whether we A.R.A. or the Soviet will have charge of the food distribution. When I told them that we shall, a kind of knowing look passed through the crowd which made me think that they inferred that we do not trust the Soviet. I hastened to explain that the system to be used in Russia is the same that the American Relief Administration has employed elsewhere in Europe and that it is the policy of our organization to manage its own affairs. "Of course," said one man, "the Americans when they say do this, it is done; move this stone, and it is moved; but in Russia there is no *poriadok* [order]." I challenged that statement and recalled to them the disorder and lawlessness of the summer of 1917 and the orderliness of today, even in the famine region. Their reply convinced me at

once that by the word "poriadok" they meant system, definite policy, and not law-abidingness. When they say that Russia has no "poriadok" they mean that Russia has no master, no clear idea as to where the present régime is taking the country. They returned again to the question as to who will have charge of the food distribution, America or the Soviet, and I again tried to set them right, only to discover that I did not succeed. They did not think that it was possible to co-operate with the Bolsheviks; that either they or we will control.

September 13.—Late yesterday afternoon Tovarisch came into the car quite proud that he had secured a special steamboat to take us down to Samara and a promise from the local authorities to send an auto at nine-thirty to take us to the dock. It was at once arranged that our railroad car should follow us to Samara the next day. Promptly at nine-thirty, and much to our astonishment, the auto came; and be it said to our everlasting shame that we were not ready before ten-thirty. After a ride of three-quarters of an hour we came to the river but saw no steamer. Tovarisch went on ahead and found a small tug, without any accommodations, bearing the proud name of "Krasni Armeets," which Bill immediately turned into "Red Rover." We made ourselves as comfortable as we could, first on the deck, and later, when we became hardened to the smell, below.

We walked into the pilot-house, the only clean place on the tug, and got into conversation with the captain and pilot. They lay the blame for the present state of affairs on the *rabochi*, by which they mean the proletariat of the cities and the Communist party. "It is the *rabochi* that oppress and plunder the peasant to the point of starvation." From the deck of our little boat a number of villages were pointed out as the scenes of the peasant uprisings. "When the peasants revolted against the Soviet a number of *prostii* [peasant] soldiers were sent against them, but the soldiers went over to the peasants. Then *rabochi communisti* and Letts were put into the field and these put down the revolt and killed nine thousand people.¹ A Soviet

¹ I do not vouch for the accuracy of the figures.

may be good enough for the rabochi, but the peasants need a president; without him they are like sheep without a shepherd." Here I interrupted to inquire whether they preferred a president to a tsar. "What is the difference, president or tsar? It is just the same, so long as we have a *khozain* [master] and poriadok."

While we were talking the commander signaled below for the engineer. When he came on deck he was told to speed up, but he replied that he was in no hurry to reach Samara. The captain's growl was drowned by the whistle of a large steamer coming toward us bearing the name "Karl Liebknecht" in prominent letters, beneath which, however, one could still make out "Nikolai Nikolaievich."

The food which the officers and crew had consisted of a few chunks of black bread; and as they complained of hunger we hailed a fisherman about five o'clock and bought a mess of fish. There being no means of cooking on board, the captain pulled alongside the wharf of Khrashevka to prepare the meal. At one time, in the not far-distant past, there have been a number of stores along the beach, but these have disappeared. However, since the inauguration of the New Economic Policy a few huts have reappeared, but there is little in them worth buying. The village itself, some six miles away, took a rather prominent part in the rising of 1918 and lost heavily in the struggle. It is now suffering the pangs of hunger, for it is living on grass, clay, sawdust, acorns, and like substitutes. The beach is piled with samovars, household goods, and farming tools, which the inhabitants have brought to be sent to Siberia to be exchanged for bread. These things have been lying first in their villages and then on the beach for three months, waiting in vain for transport. No one knows when the things will be moved and whether the bread in exchange for them will come in time to save lives. The natives surrounded us and begged help. We assured them that the American Relief Administration will do its best to take care of as many children as it can, and that the Soviet will in all likelihood look after the adults.

But the last assurance brought them little comfort and they repeated the phrase which we hear everywhere, "The Soviet knows how to take, but not how to give." There were pitiful scenes all about us; but the saddest of all was the sight of an old, old woman dragging herself on all fours and fighting with the pigs for bits of watermelon and pumpkin rind. We had the opportunity to talk to a woman school-teacher and a woman dentist, and both have sad stories to tell and little confidence that the Soviet will help. I called to their attention the great efforts of the Soviet to help the people, especially in the direction of furnishing the seed which the peasants were that very minute receiving in considerable quantities; but I failed to convince them, though they did not attempt to argue the point with me. A few days ago the school-teacher was instructed to open school and make ready to feed the children on September 15; but she has on hand not an ounce of food or a stick of wood, and she has no intention of opening the school on a paper promise. Each day the children come to her to ask, not when study will begin, but when meals will be served. Last winter the school closed because of lack of fuel, though there were forests in sight. The peasant on whom was laid the thankless task of hauling wood always claimed, when ordered to bring fuel, that either he or his horse was physically unfit. He will make the same excuse this year and not lie about it either.

The dentist said that she has been engaged by the Soviet to teach the peasants and their children the care of the teeth, but the irony of it all is that there is not a toothbrush in the community. Now that the dandelion, wild mustard, and wild onion are gone, scurvy has broken out, and she is busy treating the people for this disease, without, of course, being able to get at the root of it, which is lack of proper food. When we had come alongside the dock she had already been waiting twenty-four hours for a boat to take her to Stavropol, the seat of local authority, to get a permit to sell her watch to buy bread. We took her on board and gave her something to eat. I talked with her about the social and cultural life of the community,

especially about the village libraries of which we had heard so much. She said that village libraries exist, made up of Russian classics from the homes of the nobles, and Communist literature, and that librarians are instructed to encourage people to read the latter class of books, and that she personally knows two librarians who were arrested for failing to do so.¹

When the captain had cooked the kettle of fish we cast off the lines and dropped down the river. Toward nine o'clock I joined the commander in the wheelhouse and watched him navigate the ship of the state. As it became darker he grew a bit confused and called for his first lieutenant, Grisha, a peasant lad of seventeen, who is having his first fling of sea life. A half-hour later we sighted a ship making toward us and signaling for the right-of-way. The captain gave the mate a lantern, with instructions how to return the signal; but poor Grisha got excited and blew out the light. In order to avoid a collision the captain swung the "Red Rover" to starboard and shouted to Grisha to take soundings, but the fifteen-foot pole was too much for the seventeen-year-old boy. While he was splashing in the water the little craft bumped two or three times and then quit struggling. All officers and crew were ordered on deck, not to take to the lifeboats, for there were none on board, but to rock the vessel. This was done in the following manner: The men, four in number, lined up on one side of the deck, and then in a body marched across the six-foot beam of the boat and threw their whole weight on the railing, uttering at the same time sounds that resembled the word "slava"; then faced about and marched back. This performance was gone through for a few minutes without budging the vessel. Our twenty-three-year-old captain then shouted down to the engineer to put on full steam and back, and at the same time ordered the sailors to use the poles. While they were engaged in this opera-

¹ As will be recorded below, the "Red Rover" ran on a shoal so that it was two-thirds in the morning before we docked at Stavropol, where our lady passenger left us, not knowing whether she should spend the remainder of the night on the beach or walk five versts to the town.

tion a boat passed within a few yards of our bow and seemingly in plenty of water. The crew stopped and told the captain that they would be d—d if they would back any more, but would push her forward. This mutiny did not in the least upset the master mariner, who shouted down to the engineer, "*Vpered!*" ["Go ahead!"], and the engine began chugging, chugging; but the effort was too much, and it went dead. It took an hour to get it going, and then it made the effort of its life and got us into five feet of water. Altogether we spent two hours, thirty to twelve-thirty, on this shoal. Slowly and cautiously we went from here to Stavropol, reaching there at two-thirty.

A soviet was called to decide whether to proceed and take the chance of striking another bar or tie up for the night. Officers and crew could not agree, and it was put up to Tovarisch. He ruled that we should remain where we were until six and then go on to Samara. This decision was accepted by officers and crew, and the only question which was yet left open was "When is six o'clock?" Among the eight officers and crew there was one watch, but at the time of discussion no one seemed to know which one of the eight had had it last or where it then was. Under the circumstances Tovarisch had to change his orders and request that instead of at six o'clock the boat should get under steam at daylight. This brought the conference to an end, and the three of us spread out our blankets on hard benches eighteen inches in width, while the officers and crew stretched out on the floor.

September 14.—When we rose this morning the "Red Rover" was going full speed ahead toward Samara, and some time after noon we came alongside the "Dock of the Fleet of the Soviet Republic," and made fast.

Like so many other Russian cities which we have visited, Samara with its towering churches and mosques makes a glittering picture from a distance, but on nearer approach its real color appears to be somber ashen gray. Samara, which like many of the other Volga cities was remodeled before the war and laid out on the plan of some of our middle western centers, shows

the effects of the civil war, the invading armies that have been through, pillaging, destroying, carrying off all the riches, killing many of the able-bodied, and leaving behind the sick and the orphans. Dirt and ruins are everywhere; windows are smashed; streets are torn up and littered with rubbish and dead animals. Hotels which at one time compared well with the best of Europe, are today empty shells; church steeples are turned into wireless stations and palatial homes into barracks. In brief, the city is a wreck, a shadow of its former self. During the recent months or weeks a number of business places have been opened, of which barber shops, restaurants, and pawnshops are the most noticeable. There is hardly any intellectual life; little is known of what is going on in the outside world, or even in Russia. Just now the chief topic of conversation is food, and how to get enough bread to satisfy the craving of the hunger which absorbs all thought, all energy.

It is hard to picture the misery that greets one wherever he goes in Samara. As he lands from the ship he sees before him the beach covered with peasants and their families, who left their village homes in the hope of reaching the Ukraine or Turkestan but had only a very faint idea as to the distance. They have been here for weeks waiting for a boat, living in the meantime under the open sky or under some rudely constructed shelter, and in misery and filth indescribable. Their food consists in large part of watermelon and pumpkin rinds, potato peelings, bones, and such other things as they can pick up and turn into soup. Their chief occupations are sleeping and delousing. At the station there is another colony of peasants who are hoping to go to Siberia, and they are as ignorant of the distance to Siberia as their fellows are of the distance to the Ukraine. Both parties are waiting for transportation which the authorities cannot and will not give them. The officials prefer to keep them on the land, fearing that if these are allowed to go, millions of others will follow. The peasant either does not understand the official point of view or distrusts its motives. When I asked some peasants why they did not go, they replied,

"We cannot get permits; we are peasants and not proletarians, and therefore have no rights." It is not only on the beach and near the station that these poverty- and famine-stricken people are to be seen, but wherever one turns. If one sits down to a meal in a restaurant dozens of hungry eyes are watching from the outside, and as many as can get inside reach out bony hands for the things on the table.

We were assigned a room in the "Red Army" hotel, once the pride of Samara and now a dirty barracks with malodorous halls, for there are no conveniences, not even running water for washing. We slept on cots made of rough boards without mattresses, and even so we were more fortunate than many others in the hotel, who slept on the cold and dirty floor.

September 15.—We started out this morning on a tour of inspection of public institutions. The first place we visited was a "receiving home." Before the war this building was erected as an orphanage for fifty children; today it holds more than six hundred. They lie in the yard, on the floor, on wooden benches, one on top of another, sick and well together, covered with dirty, lousy rags. For this large number of children there are only ten small soup dishes and fifty wooden spoons. Their food consists of a watery gruel and half a pound of black bread a day.

From there we went to see children's homes of a better sort, which we found in fair condition but with little food on hand, barely enough to last through September. We had intended visiting a children's hospital and a maternity home, but the chauffeurs informed us that they would work until four o'clock and not a minute longer, and we had to give up our plans.

About six o'clock we took a walk through the city and came to a photographer's where there were famine pictures on display, and we went in to buy. There were a number of men in the shop, and while we were waiting for our order they engaged us in conversation. The first question, after learning the purpose of our mission, was whether or not we were sent by the American proletariat. We explained to them that the money

which is to be spent for the hungry is given by the American people as a whole and not by any particular group. This surprised them because, they said, they have been led to believe that it is the American proletariat that is coming to their rescue. They then wished to know about the labor troubles in America and Western Europe and the economic conditions in general. I told them that everywhere in Europe the economic situation has greatly improved, that the American Relief Administration is withdrawing altogether from many European countries where it has until now been feeding, and is reducing its operations in others because its assistance is no longer needed. As to labor troubles, there are no more than could be expected, after such a terrible war; and each month conditions are becoming more nearly normal. They were quite astonished. "Why," they exclaimed, "our papers have been telling us of the bad economic situation and of the grave labor disturbances, and we believed that they were telling the truth. We have had no other sources of information than the official publications." They asked, what so many intelligent Russians with aching hearts have asked me since coming to Russia: "What does the world think of us? Does it think we are crazy or a lot of wild savages?" I explained to them as best I could the opinion of the outside world and the hope of a great many people that their experiment may succeed. "It is not our experiment," they exclaimed, "it is the men in Moscow who are doing it and ruining the country." I tried to cheer them and encourage them to hope, but they would not be comforted. "It is no use; each day our country sinks deeper and deeper into the mire and the future looks more and more hopeless."

September 16.—This morning I bought a copy of the *Kommuna*, the official organ of the local government, and there under the heading "Most Important News" were published the following items, which are here freely translated:

"The situation in Germany is recognized as critical. The bourgeoisie has announced a dictatorship, has done away with freedom of assembly, press, et cetera.

"The revolutionary movement in Spain is spreading. In Finland there is trouble. In Czecho-Slovakia troops have been called out. In Italy the Socialist party has collected 174,000 lire for the hungry in Russia. Between Austria and Hungary there are serious misunderstandings over the frontier line which may lead to trouble. At the conference of the Czecho-Slovakia Master Builders it was unanimously voted to stand by the principles of Profintern and to unite with Moscow or Amsterdam. The English Communist party has collected 330 pounds for starving Russia. Chicherin has received from the Mongolian Revolutionary government a note asking him to protect it and look after its interests. The Latvian government is preparing measures to prevent the workngmen and organizations from helping the hungry in Russia."

The few other items of news had to do with the movement of food in Russia.

Last night before parting with the local authorities we informed them of the importance, from the point of view of helping the hungry, of having our information without delay. With this in mind they promised to have a car ready for us promptly at nine o'clock to take us to visit two or three villages. At one-thirty we were notified that the car would be at our service at two o'clock. We took advantage of this half-hour to get something to eat and walked over to the restaurant where we usually take our meals. When we sat down at the table we were informed that dinner was not yet ready because the personnel of the restaurant had guests until three and were just getting out of bed. A little after two we got into the car, and had barely reached the edge of town when the machine broke down. While the chauffeur and mechanic and the representative of the Soviet were making repairs the three of us walked across the Samarka River and photographed some camels, which are rather numerous in this part of the world. A small crowd soon gathered, which, in turn, brought a member of the militia or local police. With him and a blacksmith we talked for a few minutes, and they, like so many others, bemoaned the tragic

situation in Russia and laid the blame on the Soviet. In front of us passed a number of peasant carts loaded with a few household belongings. "These peasants," said the militiaman, "are abandoning their land because of the hunger and are going away in search of bread." I asked how it was possible for them to get away without permits. The soldier laughed and replied, "You can get anything by paying for it, much more so than under the old government. Every official is a grafter." The blacksmith accused the officials, from top to bottom, of incompetency, and holding up a piece of steel which was in his hand said: "I am a blacksmith and know what to do with this metal, but if you give it to a shoemaker he will spoil it. The men at the head of our government are shoemakers and not statesmen." I then asked the soldier how it was that he joined the Soviet army and helped to overthrow the Kerenski government. "I do not know how it happened," he replied. "I was in the rear and tired of war, and orators came and told us to stop fighting and go home, and that when peace was made the land would belong to the peasants, the ships to the sailors, the railways to the trainmen, the factories to the workers, that there would be no masters and that all would live in peace and be prosperous. We believed in their words and followed them, and this is the result."

Our car came up and we went on again, this time for about fifteen minutes. Bill, who was sitting on the right side, thought that something was wrong, and on looking back saw the tire chasing the rim at full speed but gradually falling behind. It took about three-quarters of an hour to make the necessary repairs, and then we went on, passing on the way a number of dead horses, and here and there a potato patch carefully guarded. A beautiful and fertile plain of rich soil was all about, over us a sunny sky, and it seemed as if nature has done everything in her power to make this region the home of a happy people; yet, because of war, hatred, ignorance, and mismanagement, millions of people living on these steppes are doomed to die a miserable death this coming winter. Better

tools, a little more knowledge of dry farming, a little less requisitioning by the government during the past two years, would have saved the situation and millions of simple, honest folk. Today all these fields are untilled and will probably remain untilled, at least a great part, in the immediate future.

Toward five o'clock we drove into the village of Sukhaia-viazavka, where the children came running and shouting, "They have brought us bread, they have brought us bread," which unfortunately we had not. The inhabitants surrounded us, and with tears in their eyes begged help. For months they have been living on grass bread; their bodies are already swollen as a result; and they know that in two or three weeks more, that is, as soon as the snow falls, they will not have even that. Out of 3,000 sheep which the village possesses in normal times it now has 300; the cows are either sold or eaten, and the horses as soon as they show signs of giving out are slaughtered and consumed. Should the inhabitants survive this winter they will have neither tools nor live stock with which to farm, and that means more hunger and more suffering. But will they survive? The financial resources of the American Relief Administration are so limited that it will be impossible to feed all the children, let alone the adults. The great burden of the relief work must fall on the Soviet, and it is doubtful whether it can bear it. We visited the only children's home in the village, and found it lacking almost everything that such a place should have except sickly children. From there we went to meet the head of the local soviet, an honest and kindly young peasant who had seen hard service in the Red Army. By the time we were seated, the room was full of peasants eager to tell their story. I turned to one of them standing near me, to inquire whether he had plowed and seeded his land. He answered that he has not plowed because he has no horses, has not seeded because he has no seed. He was interrupted and jumped upon by the secretary of the Samara gubispolkom who accompanied us. He accused the peasant of being a *kulak* [one having too much land, too much wealth, etc.], and then, turning to the others,

he told them that he, too, is a son of a *muzhik* [peasant]. But neither his appearance nor his manner of speech, nor his past history in Germany and New York, nor his way of thinking convinced us of the truth of the statement. I could not but help contrasting him with the young presiding officer. The latter is one of the peasants, has worked with them, and understands their point of view, while the former has lived in cities, has little in common with the tillers of the soil, and looks down upon them because of their ignorance and filth, but is in love with the idea of saving them according to a certain plan.

The attack by the secretary on the peasant put a damper on the assembly, and we spent the remainder of the quarter of an hour in getting statistical data. When we came out in the street a large crowd gathered around us, and though the peasants who composed it bitterly bemoaned their fate, yet not a word was said against the government. Whether it was because of a fear of the two representatives of the Soviets higher up, or because of appreciation of what the Soviet was doing for them, I cannot tell. One little man, who was dressed as a peasant but in other respects did not resemble one, compared the Communist leaders and masses in Russia to Moses and the Children of Israel. "Just as Moses tried to lead his followers to the Promised Land and on the way discovered that they were not ready and was obliged to put them through a period of preparation, so the Communist leaders must do with the Russians." When the crowd broke up he got me aside and asked me whether he could get help for some of his friends who are badly in need. I referred him to Moses. I asked the young girls who stood near me whether they could read and write, and nearly all of them replied in the negative. The mothers took their part and explained that they had sent them to school last winter but could not get them in. They complained of this injustice but admitted that the school facilities under the Soviet are better than they were under the old régime. In addition to the State school, a church school is still running and many children go there. In this village there is no interference in church affairs by the Soviet.

September 17.—Today we called on the members of the Orthodox Church to acquaint them with our plans and to get their advice and co-operation. They had heard something about us and were greatly pleased at what we proposed to do. The first priest we met was an archdeacon, who told us of a church organization, called the Christian Brotherhood, fully organized and ready to help, but lacking the necessary funds. He therefore suggested that we work through this body. We explained to him why we cannot act on his suggestion, and he was satisfied. The bishop seemed glad to see us and when we told him what the American Relief Administration hopes to do, he gave his hearty approval. Our plan of organizing in each community a committee made up of representatives of the government, the clergy, the teaching and medical professions, and the ordinary citizens, pleased him, and he thought that such a committee would work in harmony, especially if the present government should agree. He next told us of the efforts and plans of his diocese to relieve the famine situation. As soon as he should receive authorization from the government he would, through the Christian Brotherhood, above mentioned, issue an appeal to all the churches in Russia outside of the famine area. The local authorities seem to be ready to grant the authorization, provided the food obtained is turned over to them for general distribution. His Reverence was much pleased that we asked for the church co-operation, something which the local government never did. He told us that he was in Moscow when Gorki came to the Patriarch to ask that he issue an appeal to Christendom. This was done, but whether the appeal was acknowledged the Patriarch did not know. He said that it was rumored in Moscow that the Archbishop of Canterbury offered help on condition that the Patriarch and the church should have a say in the distribution.

Our railway car, which followed us from Simbirsk, reached Samara yesterday morning, and last evening we moved back into our house on wheels, where we could clean up and stretch out, which we could not do in the hotel or on the boat. To

celebrate the home-coming we went to a cabaret, *The Red Mosquito*. Two performances were scheduled, but for some reason unknown to the public the actors did not show up until late, so that the first was entirely omitted. In order to earn a living every amateur has become a professional actor, and dramatic art in the provincial cities of Russia is not very high.

This morning I had two appointments, one at ten and the other at eleven o'clock, but neither of the Russians showed up. Later in the day I ran into one of them, and he explained to me the reason for his non-appearance. He, with several other men, has a garden of potatoes and cabbages; because of the famine it is necessary to have someone always on guard, and last night was his turn. I spent the time of waiting for my expected visitors sunning myself in the railway yard and talking with the switchmen. They were hungry and they were angry at the government, "the crocodiles who steal our food." From this they went on to enumerate the sins of the Soviet officials, and one of them told of two commissars who went through his village dead drunk. "Well," I said, "did not the Tsar's officials get drunk?" "Yes," he replied, "not only the officials but the Tsar himself, but when in that condition they did not show themselves in public. Those were good days before we had *svoboda*. When a *prazdnik* [holiday] came on, a workman went to his boss, took off his hat, and asked for two or three rubles, and with that he had a real *prazdnik*. He got drunk, to be sure; he smashed windows, yes; but when he sobered up and was brought before the *nachalnik* [officer] he took off his hat and explained that it was a *prazdnik* and got off. Look at it now. These crocodiles do not even know what a *prazdnik* is, and when a decent man gets drunk or lays off a few days he is arrested. This is what they call *svoboda*."

The switchmen then wished to know whether or not we will hand over our supplies to the government for distribution. I replied that we shall control the distribution ourselves. "Under those conditions the people will get some of the food. They will rob you as they do us, they will steal your supplies as easily

as they did the 9,000 puds of grain from the elevator some time ago." I asked whether they were quite certain on that point. "We did not see them do it, but we believe they did it." Once more they harked back to the good tsarist days when Russia lived in friendship with the whole world and when Russians were not looked upon as the outcasts of the earth, when the muzhik could have a prazdnik and get drunk, and when his children had enough to eat and drink. "When the Tsar comes back," they continued, "every child will climb on a telephone pole to cheer, and each and every muzhik and *baba* [peasant woman] will kneel down and thank God. To the devil with svoboda and hunger!"

September 19.—We are detained here because of the difficulty of telegraphic communication with Moscow. A week ago we wired for instructions, but up to date no reply has come. More than two weeks ago we were notified that a telegram was sent for us to Samara in care of the station master, and as soon as we reached this city Tovarisch went to the station to make inquiries and was told there was nothing for us and that the station master has no time to waste on telegrams for other people. Today the station master was in a better mood and somehow recalled that he did receive a wire for some Americans; but he was not quite certain what became of it—he thought that perhaps he sent it to the post office. We are on the trail and may yet find it. Had we had this message, which is very important for our work, we should have been on our way today. The truth of the matter is that the railway men, who are leftovers from the antebellum days, are not very submissive to the new régime. Tovarisch, who carries a special mandate from the Central Soviet in Moscow to ask and receive whatever service we need, handles the station masters in a harsh and humiliating manner, threatening every minute to arrest them. Sometimes they do as he asks, and at other times they stick to the letter of the law and tell him that our car must take its turn with the others. Last year when Trotsky was at the head of the railways he treated the station masters and other

incorrigibles in a military fashion and got some results, but the system of putting a man up against the wall and shooting him had to stop, or the railways would have had to stop running.

We are detained here for still another reason. A few days before we left Simbirsk, Tovarisch telegraphed to the gubispolkom to have ready for us certain statistical information. As soon as we reached Samara we asked for it and were told that it would be given us on the following morning; and the following morning is still before us. Yesterday we decided to take a hand in the matter and I put myself in touch with a certain official who had it in his power to supply the data. It was agreed that I should meet him at his office today at one o'clock. At one-thirty while I was with him a note was handed to him from the president of the gubispolkom, the head man of the government, asking him to prepare certain tables, the information called for, by noon of today; that is to say, he asked for the information to be ready an hour and a half before his note was received. Thanks to our efforts of yesterday I secured the needed tables today, copies of them will be sent to the gubispolkom tomorrow, and if we remain here until Wednesday we will receive them then through the official channel.

I asked the chief of the bureau why the work drags so, and he said it is due to: (1) Lack of properly qualified workers. Russia is short of educated people and each year the shortage becomes greater. Many of the men and women in the government service are not Communists and have no interest in their experiment. (2) Lack of financial resources and consequently a shortage of personnel of all kinds. Two years ago his bureau employed five hundred people; today it has on its list two hundred and forty. (3) Lack of efficiency. He estimated that his staff does only about one-fourth of the work that a similar organization does in America. This lack of efficiency is due in part to lack of interest and in part to lack of food. Members of his bureau receive in addition to 100,000 rubles a month salary (equivalent to the value of twenty-five pounds of black bread) the following paioik monthly: eighteen pounds of

flour, one-fourth pound of candy, one-fourth pound of salt, one box of matches (about sixty), and one-fourth pound of tobacco. A person having a family, no matter how large, receives a double paiok, but never more than a double. On this pay and paiok it is hard to get along, and consequently it is necessary to undertake more than one job, all of which undermines the health and leads to inefficiency. During the wars the employees could be driven and frightened into work, but now they are no longer afraid. They are like tired and hungry horses that no longer mind the whip, and the only way to make them go at all is to walk ahead of them with a bucket of oats. Unfortunately there are no oats. The last paiok which employees received was for the first two weeks in August, and day after tomorrow they will receive a paiok for the last two weeks. In other words the government is actually a month behind in payment. In order to carry on its work next year the bureau needs 300,000,000 rubles; the central government in Moscow has allowed it 50,000,000, but has given only 10,000,000. There is not a stick of wood, a bottle of kerosene, or an electric bulb for the winter, and no money with which to buy.

I returned to the car about seven in the evening and found John, Bill, and Tovarisch gone. A few minutes later the secretary of the gubispolkom came and explained to me the working of the Communist government. He said that during the civil war many became Communists for mercenary reasons and that the present is a good time to get rid of them—hence the party cleaning that is now going on.¹ To be a Communist should mean working unselfishly and for the public good. In view of this explanation I asked, why do the mercenary members object to leaving the party? He gave an evasive answer. He went on, however, to say that after the housecleaning all the high positions in the government will be in the hands of the Communists and that all Communists who desire offices can have them. I asked whether or not it is true, as I had heard, that

¹I later learned that he was one of those cleaned out.

workmen cannot give up their jobs without permission and danger of arrest, and that no one can leave his city to go to another without a special permit. He denied that it is true. After he left I put the question to the porters and the chauffeur, who said that it is true. The chauffeur, who is a loyal Bolo, explained that this applies only to the so-called skilled labor, but when I inquired where the line is drawn between skilled and unskilled labor he was not quite clear. The Russians themselves got into an argument, after which the chauffeur went out. A few moments later one of the other two came and announced that the departed brother is a spy sent out by the Cheka to watch us and he produced certain evidence which sounded convincing. We have also discovered that the accused comrade understands English and has been listening in.

September 20.—We are still held up waiting for telegraphic orders and we are using the enforced leisure to meet with different groups. This morning John and I called on the Rector of the University and with him went to a meeting of what we would call the county superintendents. They were very eager to know whether or not the teachers will be taken care of in the matter of food, and were a bit disappointed when it was said that no special provision has been made for them. The same disappointment we have noticed in the faces of the parents when they learn that children only will be fed.

Had an appointment with a chief of a bureau at twelve o'clock, but when I left his office two hours later he had not yet come. I spent the two hours pleasantly in talking with three chiefs of divisions. One of them is an old revolutionist who met George Kennan in Siberia; another was for many years a railway official but lost his job during the revolutionary upheaval; and the third held a position in the Kerenski government. Out of the nearly two hundred fifty men in their bureau, only one is a Communist; all the others are opposed to the Soviet, have little interest in supporting it, and hope it will fall, though they confessed they do not know what will come in its place. They were hungry and admitted that they

graft every chance they have, that everybody is grafting, the officials most of all because they have the best opportunities.

September 21.—Went into the city this morning, and on the way ran into a well-known economist. He questions whether the New Economic Policy can do much to build up Russia. So long as the government controls large industries, as it proposes to do, capital has no assurance that at some time or other another policy may not be put into force which will rob the investor of his dividend and capital. He thinks that the new policy will help commerce of the quick-turnover kind. On the whole he is pessimistic about the future unless there shall be a return to freedom of the press and of trade, and civic liberty.

From this man I went into a bookstore, and while there the police came in and started a search. The why and wherefore of the search I know not, for I was requested to leave. I wandered on to the restaurant, where, while waiting for a meal, the proprietor, his wife, and daughter told me of the wonderful establishment they had before the revolution. The last three years, they said, have been very hard, but during the last few months the situation has greatly improved.

September 22.—We got a telegram from Moscow, and as a result our party broke up last night. John and Tovarisch took the car to Moscow, while Bill and I remained to wait for the food train now on the way and to make arrangements for feeding the children. Toward evening I had a call from a professional man who has traveled much, has attained some success in his chosen work, and has written on political themes. He regards the present situation as very bad because of the thorough demoralization of the Russians, who have lost all respect for the property rights of other people and all incentive to work. Everybody steals, partly because of hunger, partly because of the idea that private property is theft. Those who had property before the revolution and had it taken from them see nothing wrong in trying to get some of it back. In the matter of work the situation is equally discouraging. Why work? "The peasant worked and lost the results of labor.

Why should I work?" is a common saying. Until recently everyone worked for the State, all received the same *païok*, no distinction being made between the doctor and the porter. Why exert yourself when your efforts are not rewarded? This habit of loafing on the job has become universal.

In referring to the situation in Russia during the period of nationalization, the speaker said that it works out quite differently from what is generally believed. It is true one cannot buy things from the government store, but one can always secure it from the clerk, and as nearly everyone works for the government, there is a constant underground trade between the employees in the government goods, or in other words, all the clerks steal.

He went on to point out that the private and public buildings are crumbling to pieces because the State has not the means to keep them up and the former owners have lost the right to them. No new houses are being built because there is no private capital and no certainty of future possession. As houses crumble people crowd into others, which leads to fires and destruction. There is no water, and the fire department will not work. In order to become rich one must have capital, and to have capital one must steal. If one has money, or friends in the government, he can get a permit to go to Southern Russia or other places where he can buy food cheaply and then sell it where it is dear.

September 23.—Today Bill and I visited a number of bureaus and met a number of doctors. They are all hungry and inquired whether or not the American Relief Administration will feed them to enable them to take care of the children. In some of the hospitals the doctors and nurses are leaving because they are receiving no food; and to prevent a wholesale exodus, it is necessary in some hospitals to put the staff on the sick list so that it can have the same meals that the sick receive.

September 25.—Today we inspected all the "receiving homes"; conditions were heartbreaking. Homes which were originally intended for thirty or forty children now house ten to fifteen times that number. In one home we found children

sitting on the floor as close together as they can, and learned that they sleep just where they sit without any beds or covering. In other places the floor was littered with bundles of dirty, stinking rags, concealing the cadaverous bodies of young children with such old, shriveled faces that they look like mummies. One home, housing girls from twelve to seventeen, has at its head a young man of twenty-two.

On our tour of inspection we were accompanied by an officer of the *gubnarob* [department of education], a woman of about thirty, a Communist, and a person of ability. She has a child, and a husband of whom she has seen but little during the last four years, for the Communist party has detailed her to work in Samara and him in Turkestan. She hopes to join him if she can get released, which is not easy. Owing to the bad mail service, weeks and sometimes months pass without an opportunity to exchange letters.

This morning Bill and I drove out to the village of Smyshlaevka to organize a committee to take charge of the American Relief Administration kitchen. Two members of the local soviet, two members of the local government "committee-to-help-the-hungry," two teachers, and the priest were selected for the organization. The priest was a bit surprised that he should have been asked to serve, for he is seldom called upon to act in a public capacity. The inhabitants of the village seemed grateful for the proffered help. There is very little food in the village, and bread is eaten by only about two per cent of the population; all the others feed on grass and other unwholesome substitutes. For next year the village has seeded with the government seed about three hundred fifty desiatins, about one-fourth of normal.

September 26.—Spent the day in running around from place to place to form an organization. In the conference with the head of the Samara authorities we almost had a clash as to the extent the local government shall control our activities.

In the course of the day I learned a little more about the search in the bookshop. In the window of the store stood a

folio illustrating the War of 1812, on the cover of which were the Imperial eagle and the words *otechestvennaia voina*, the war of the Fatherland (Napoleonic war). A Communist, passing by and seeing these signs of monarchy and bourgeois patriotism, raised a protest, which led to the search and the confiscation of all books of a monarchial and nationalistic nature. I inquired as to the final fate of the confiscated books and was told that it all depends on the use that can be made of the paper.

Mr. X— came again today. He explained just how physicians have managed to live during the last three years. They are, of course, State employees and as such receive a *paiok* and a few thousands of paper rubles; but their most substantial income is derived from the one or two bottles of pure and denatured alcohol which are apportioned to them each month and which they sell. They also have some income from private practice.

September 27.—Our first train of supplies came in, in charge of a convoy of dirty and hungry Chinese soldiers who spoke very little Russian. In the course of the day we visited many bureaus and talked with a number of people. We returned home toward evening, and for more than an hour we were listening to people, among them students, who wish employment. Two young women are members of the organization called the Christian Association, and offer the service of that body. These two intelligent young women are greatly discouraged over the material and spiritual condition of the students. The president of the student body, or some student organization, made a long speech of welcome and tendered the services of his fellows. A professor asked for a job; his credentials indicate that he is a teacher of mathematics in the University, in the technical school, in the military academy, in the business college, and the gymnasium. He claimed that from none of these institutions has he received any pay for three months, and he offers to work for us from nine until four, the hours when he is not teaching.

September 28.—This morning we went to the station and found the second food train and several American Relief Administration men, among whom were Dr. Vernon Kellogg and Tommy Burland. Late in the afternoon I had a caller, a Samaran, whom I have already met several times. My visitor pointed out that the present Russian government is going back to the Right much faster than it went to the Left. Wherever pressure is applied, there it yields. At the beginning of the revolution it started with a volunteer army and proletariat officers, but this had to be given up quickly and the old system put back. The same is true of open diplomacy, which has come and gone. The most difficult point to give up was the communistic economic and socialization policy, but the peasant uprisings of a year ago forced the government to go back to the old capitalistic system of private trade. This movement to the Right will go on until all, or at least the more important, enterprises return to the hands of private individuals. Already there is talk of permitting small private banks to exist, and there are strong evidences that the legal profession and the old courts will be re-established. The attitude of the government toward the intelligentsia is undergoing a great change. In the beginning it assumed that the factory proletariat could run everything, and the educated people were allowed to perish. Now Russia has a famine of educated people and specialists, and to save this handful the living conditions of professors and experts are being improved. The situation in Russia will be in a muddle until every man is back in his place and doing the work that he is best fitted for, which is not true today when lawyers are hotel-keepers and cooks are judges. My visitor illustrated his point by saying, "Suppose an officer approached a company of soldiers at rest, facing in all directions, and said 'Right face,' followed immediately by 'March.' The results would be confusion and marching in different directions. The first order should be given to have all facing the same way and every one in his place."

In regard to the question of what would be the effect on

the present government from the opening up of Russia, my visitor thought that it would be unfavorable. When the question of giving concessions was first brought up, the Communists rejoiced because it made the bourgeoisie come to them and submit to their terms; but now they are less sure of themselves. He related this story which is going the rounds: "An American, in asking for a concession, promised to work the men not more than eight hours a day, to feed and clothe them, and to pay them good wages. When the government realized that the men working for a private firm would be better treated than those in its employ, it dropped negotiations. Whether this story is true it matters not, but it certainly would be true if private capital should go into industry. The coming of charitable organizations from bourgeois countries will compel the people to ask the question, Why are countries living under another economic system better off than Russia?"

September 30.—In the afternoon I started for Moscow in company with Dr. Kellogg and Tommy Burland. The way the poor, ragged, famished refugees rushed the train was tragic. Every car was more than overcrowded and those who could not get in stuck to the outside like flies. They covered the roofs, the steps, the bumpers, and as many as could rode under the cars, holding on as best they could. At every stop they crawled out and ran up and down to get warm. One man rode on the steps of our car and our liaison officer pulled a gun on him and ordered him off. The sickly looking passenger stared at him and said: "Shoot! Do you think it makes any difference to me whether I am shot or die of hunger?" He did not, however, ride very long, for when we came to the bridge across the Volga the militia pulled off all the refugees; but when we got across there was another mob of them waiting, shouting, swearing, pushing, all trying to get away from the famine and the typhus and to reach some place where they may beg a piece of bread.

We reached Moscow on the morning of October 2.

III

SAMARA TO ASTRAKHAN

(OCTOBER 8—NOVEMBER 6, 1921)

Saturday, October 8, 1921.—After several days of negotiation it was promised late yesterday that Governor Goodrich, Repp, an interpreter, and I would be provided with accommodations on the Samara train which would leave tonight at ten. Early this morning the time of departure was changed to six in the afternoon, but at eleven o'clock it was changed once more to one-thirty. Governor Goodrich and I, who are quartered at the Pink House,¹ arrived at the station and went aboard a little before one, but did not find Repp and the interpreter and, what is more important, the food which they had with them. At one o'clock the train pulled out without our companions and without the grub. However, it is an ill wind that does not blow some good. For reasons known to somebody, the four of us were crowded into one coupé (although there are several quite empty); and the failure of our two companions to appear gave the two of us more room. Our supplies for the journey consist of two small packages of chocolate, half of a small box of raisins, a piece of soap, a towel, a cup, and a glass. We called the porter into consultation and he promised to look after us properly, which he proceeded to do by bringing in a hot liquid which he called tea but which was really dried pumpkin rind water. We drank it in Russian fashion, that is to say, we bit off pieces of chocolate and sucked the tea through them.

When we left Moscow our car seemed empty, but after we had gone some distance different people passed our door and looked in on us with an interest which was more than curiosity. I became in turn interested and went out into the corridor.

¹ The houses in which the personnel of the A.R.A. lived were known as White, Pink, Blue, Brown, etc.

Right next to our coupé was a rather handsome man, and as I pulled out my package of cigarettes he offered me a light and we were soon in conversation. He is an engineer in charge of a small coal mine near Simbirsk, but has to discontinue mining from time to time to get something to eat. I inquired whether he has much of a labor problem, whether labor is as demoralized as has been reported to us. He replied that on the whole labor in the smaller places is not as demoralized as in the big centers; that if the workingmen were given food they would do a good day's work. In my hands was a copy of *Current History*, and he asked to be allowed to see it and I handed it to him. Our conversation attracted attention, and pretty soon four young people from different parts of the car began moving gradually toward us and one of them came alongside to hear what we were saying, and to examine the publication which I had handed to the engineer. This became a bit embarrassing for the man, and he excused himself, leaving me with what I learned to be four tovarischi—three young men and one young woman. We were soon engaged in a warm discussion. They were "Party Workers," which means men and women engaged in advancing the cause of communism, in preaching the true gospel among the workingmen. They asked about the plans of the American Relief Administration, the number of children it intends to feed, and related questions. I gave them such information as I had, and added that had we known earlier of the hunger, we should have been better prepared to cope with it. Tovarisch No. 1 demanded to know, in a not very gentle tone, why we did not know about it sooner. I replied that we had no way of finding out. This he denied and said that Russia was open and had been open to anybody who wished to come. Tovarisch No. 2 came to my rescue and stated that until now the revolution had been in the stage of sickness, consequently only those were admitted whose presence would bring cheer and not sadness to the patient. This answer angered Tovarisch No. 1, especially the intimation that the revolution is a sickness. For a few minutes the tovarischi had a warm argu-

ment, No. 1 insisting that the revolution was revolution and No. 2 refusing to change his position. When the fire of the debate had burned itself out, No. 2 bemoaned the fact that Russia is and has been a land of extremes, quite unlike some of the other states of Europe, which keep a middle course. Before the war Russia was the most reactionary power, and now she is the most radical. When I ventured to suggest that the change in the economic policy was taking Russia into the same middle course sailed by the other states, all four tovarischi jumped on me: "We have not changed our policy, we have not given up our ideal; we have merely changed our tactics in order better to prepare our people for the Communist state." I felt properly squelched, and subsided. Seeing me down, the four turned their guns on me and opened fire on American institutions: America where the workingmen feed on the crumbs from the exploiters' tables, America where machinery has so crushed the laborer that at the age of forty he is a complete physical wreck! Condemnations of our capitalistic system fell thick and fast for a few minutes. When the smoke had cleared a bit I humbly ventured to inquire whether they were quite sure of their facts and whether it was not well known to them that the American laborer is better off than those of any other part of the world. To the first part of my question they answered that they were sure of their facts, and as to the second they admitted that for the time being our workingmen are perhaps better off but in so far as the future is concerned they are worse off, for they are not following the communistic way of salvation. I remarked that in religion the world has given up the idea of one-road salvation and has accepted the other one, that it is possible for the good people of all sects to reach heaven, and that after all there is not much difference between the ultimate aim of Russian idealists and American idealists, which is the doing away with poverty and ignorance and the bringing about of a higher and better state of society. Had I known what was coming, I should not have made such a speech. "You talk as foolishly as the Christian Socialists," shouted Tovarisch No. 1,

"and will not admit that society is divided into classes. We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that only through communism can the world be saved; and the difference between your idealists and our idealists is the difference between our two governments. We have a workingmen's government, determined to give the proletariat its rights; you have a capitalists' government bent on protecting the interests of the exploiters. Under the circumstances it is foolish to talk of common ideals and of the welfare of mankind." He then went on to develop the Marxian theory of class struggle, which he seemed to know by heart.

I do not know what turn the conversation would have taken had not the train come to a standstill in front of the Riazan station, and the Governor and I made a rush for the buffet. We found there a mob of people and little to eat. However, we bought a few sandwiches of "wurst," drank two cups of hot water, then made our beds in the cold and dark coupé (for our car is neither heated nor lighted), went to bed, and sang ourselves to sleep with gospel hymns.

October 9.—When I woke this morning we were at the station Tarbelovo, and from the window I could see a large market. I dressed hastily and went shopping, and returned with four pieces of millet bread, a roast chicken, and ten boiled eggs, all costing 36,000 rubles, or 36 cents.

In the course of the day I had a long talk with the woman Communist. She and Tovarisch No. 3 live as husband and wife and as soon as they have more time they will register that fact in the proper place, so that in case one should fall ill the other would have the right to act for him. Though materially she is worse off than before the war, she would not for the world go back to that period when she was looked down upon because of her poverty and race (she is apparently a Jewess). She admitted that at the present time there is no freedom in Russia and that the only difference between the highhandedness of the old and that of the new régime is the fact that the latter represents a majority of the people. When questioned how she

figured out a majority considering that the Communists are a small part of the total population, she replied that this is not a fair way of stating the case; the Communists, being the brains of the proletariat and the peasants, represent them and therefore represent the majority. When I told her the world was watching with deep interest the Russian experiment and if it succeeded here it would be tried in other countries, she complained that the world is not treating Russia fairly. In the first place communism is not a doubtful experiment; it is sure of success if practiced universally. By holding back, the world is standing in its own way and delaying the great day. The capitalists are well aware of this and consequently do everything in their power to discredit the movement. This is especially true of the capitalists of the United States, who drove out the Communists already there and refused to admit others. She has great faith in the power of the communistic gospel and honestly believes that if its preachers are given freedom of speech in the United States they will in a short time convert the whole population. When I asked her why, during the last four years, so few Russians in Russia have been won over to the doctrines of Lenin, she said it was due to the hard times.

With the engineer also I had a talk. He was optimistic as to the future of Russia because of her wonderful natural resources. Though not a partisan of the Soviet, he does not despair of it. From the very beginning of the revolution he took a neutral attitude, yet he learned that in 1919, when Iudenich threatened Petrograd, his name was on the list of suspects kept by the Reds and the Whites. Being a scientifically trained man he is not greatly molested, but he is never sure that the axe may not come down on him one of these days. He has to be very careful, and tries not to get mixed up in politics.

October 10.—We arrived at Syzran about nine o'clock and restocked our larder with bread that was almost white. Toward five o'clock we came to Samara.

October 11.—Called on some of my former friends and find the situation growing worse, especially for the office

workers and peasants. In some of the bureaus the flour paiok has been entirely done away with and a potato ration put in its place. One chief of a bureau told me that his September paiok amounted to seventy-two pounds of potatoes, one box of matches, one-fourth pound of salt, one-fourth pound of tobacco, one-half pound of sugar or candy; and his salary was 76,000 rubles. This was all he received from the State for himself and family. At the office of the newspaper *Kommuna* there were frightful stories of suffering and death in the villages.

Visited a Communist bookstore and while waiting for the chief in charge I had a talk with the assistants and one other man who happened to be there. When I explained to them that I wanted Bolo literature for the study of history they laughed and said that there was no history in the Bolo books, only propaganda. One of them picked up a magazine, called the "Red Warrior" (*Krasni Armeets*) and pointed to two articles relating to the stay of the Czechs in Samara and to a Kolchak affair which also had something to do with Samara. The three men assured me that they lived in Samara at the time when the events in question took place and they know that the written report is untrue.

About ten days ago it was agreed between the American Relief Administration and the local government that the latter should appoint a Russian director to work with the American director of the former. The man was nominated and accepted by the American Relief Administration. A few days later the two directors selected an assistant director. Today the government requested that the assistant director be dropped, but would give no other reason than that the Cheka found him *persona non grata*. The Russian director, the direct representative of the government, said that the man's character and past records are above suspicion and that the only possible objection is a political one.

October 12.—A University student called and explained the status of the students during the last three years. In practical courses, such as medicine, engineering, and agronomy, students

are mobilized and as such receive paioks during the period of study and positions when they have their diplomas. Students who pursue courses in liberal arts receive no paiok. At present all students in liberal arts are grouped into the School of Pedagogy and are mobilized in the same way as the students in the practical courses, and when their studies have been finished they too will be given positions. My student friend complained of the difficulty of doing any studying under present conditions. Formerly parents supported their children, but now the fathers can hardly keep the family in bread, and consequently students must rustle for themselves, for the government paiok is quite inadequate.

October 14.—Colonel Haskell and party reached Samara from Ufa Wednesday night (October 12), and we had a conference. It was decided that Governor Goodrich, Professor Hutchinson, and I should go to Saratov and the Haskell crowd should return to Moscow. Our train was to pull out at midnight, but when we reached the station at eleven the station master told us that the train would not leave until eleven next morning. It was five in the afternoon when it departed. At Samara the railway officials advised us to go as far as Ruzaevka and there change for Saratov. When we reached Ruzaevka today at one o'clock the railway officials urged us to go on to Razian and there get the train for Saratov. They told us it was not certain when the next train would leave Ruzaevka for Penza, but under no circumstances would one go before tomorrow, and that when we did reach Penza, it would take a day to move our car from one station to another. Furthermore they warned us that the trains from Penza to Saratov run only twice a week, Fridays and Tuesdays. Notwithstanding this warning we decided to take our chances, and had our car uncoupled from the main train which went on to Moscow. As we were short of supplies we at once sent one of our porters to the market. He had not been gone ten minutes when an engine backed up to take on our car to Penza. The crew agreed to wait a few minutes while we sent the second porter to fetch the first, and

when the two appeared in sight the train started in motion and the porters had to run for it. A number of people tried to get into our car, but only one, a railway official, was admitted. His position pays him 100,000 rubles a month and a small païok of twenty pounds of flour and a few other things of no great value. He and his family (six in all) have the use of about four desiatins of land, made up of strips here and there, which help to keep the wolf from the door. From three-fourths of a desiatin of rye planted last fall he harvested twenty puds this year; thirteen of these puds he reseeded this autumn, two he paid as tax, and five he has left for his yearly bread supply. He and some others planted a number of desiatins of wheat last spring, putting in seven puds to the desiatin, and harvested only two puds; but this was in Saratov and not in Penza where he now lives.

October 15.—We reached Penza at ten o'clock at night, and Tovarisch, who went to the station agent, was told that at five in the morning our car would be moved to the Saratov station. This morning the hour was changed to nine, and at that hour Tovarisch came back with the report that there was no engine and no fuel, and that there was no hope that our car would be transferred before eleven. A half hour later the car was moved.

Hutchinson and I spent the day visiting bureaus and collecting food data. Penza guberniia is not included in the famine area, but there is considerable famine here nevertheless. The crop of this year is not enough to feed the total population, many of whom are refugees from other parts who have brought typhus and are dying like flies. The hospitals and the children's homes are overcrowded, the schools are closed, except one here and there; for the city teachers cannot live on 12,000 and the country teachers on 6,000 rubles a month and no païok.

Penza looks picturesque from the outside and ugly from the inside. The churches are in need of paint, the houses of repairs, and the streets of upkeep. There are many small shops but not many stores; those that are open sell food, jewelry, and ladies' hats. The officials we met were kindly and are doing what they



Top: *American warehouse and trucks*
 Center: *Camel transport, outside an A.R.A. warehouse*
 Bottom: *An American ship landing food at Odessa*

can to make the most of a bad situation. It is not so much the scarcity of food as the scarcity of the medium of exchange which worries them. The markets have an abundance of good things to eat and at prices that are reasonable, except bread, which sells from 4,500 to 5,000 rubles the pound.

October 16.—We left Penza some time during the night and made the scheduled six-hour run to Rtischevo in ten hours. After waiting there two hours our car was attached to a freight going to Saratov. There were a hundred or more *meshochniki* [people with sacks] stealing a ride. One woman had left Saratov with woodsaws, which she traded off for potatoes; others had exchanged other things for flour, etc. In addition to these sackers there were numerous refugees driven by hunger, drawn by wild rumors of plenty "over there," wearing themselves out in a vain search for a piece of bread. They will continue to wander thus until frost and typhus relieve them of their misery. We rolled along for about three hours, and all of a sudden there was a blowing of whistles, a slowing down, and a mad rush forward. Pretty soon Tovarisch came running back saying that the engine had blown up, that the engineer was burned and in great need of medical attention. We took some grease and bandages from our medical kit and hastened to the rescue. Neither the engineer nor the engine was as badly injured as was supposed, and by ten o'clock at night the train began bumping and jerking so hard that we could hardly go on with our poker game.

October 17.—At nine in the morning we were in Saratov, and at once went in search of the American Relief Administration office, which we located after a time. This Saratov with its broad streets and modern buildings is the most up-to-date looking city we have seen in Russia this year.

October 18.—We made the rounds of the bureaus to get information, and after much difficulty succeeded in part. In some of the places visited we found Russians who were active in the revolution of 1905 and knew all the important leaders of the more recent period. These Saratov men blame Kerenski

for the evil days that have come because, they say, Kerenski was a talker and not a doer. They do not think that he and his associates have any chance as against the Reds or Whites in so far as the immediate future of Russia is concerned. I called on a number of professors, who are very poor but not so poor as a year ago. Most of them teach in several places, while their wives work in State bureaus, but their combined efforts are not sufficient to make ends meet, and they are compelled to sell the things they still have left. In morale they are also much better off, for they are searched less and fear arrest and imprisonment less than a year ago. They feel keenly their isolation and seem glad to have a word from the world which they once knew. Some had heard of Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, and inquired about it. They told us that the report which appeared in Western papers in 1918 that the women of Saratov were nationalized had no truth in it, and that the story originated from the posting on the walls of a written notice by some crank proposing such a law. For his pains the individual was shot, but the publicity it gave was hard to kill.

October 19.—Russia is a strange country and full of wonders. Ever since coming here Governor Goodrich and Repp have been trying to secure passage down the river and Hutchinson and I up the river, and neither party has been successful. Our tovarisch has worked hard on the subject, and yesterday he made us a final report. The government cannot help us; its two boats are out somewhere and will not be back for a fortnight. However, it offers transportation down the river on one of the regular steamers which is due to leave Saratov at four o'clock this morning; but for going up the stream it cannot give us boat, automobile, or horse. Not long after midnight the Governor was awakened to catch the four o'clock boat, but when he got to the river there was no boat. At noon Hutchinson was informed that a boat is at the disposal of the Governor and Repp, and another at the service of Hutchinson and me; that at five o'clock the Governor's ship will weigh anchor, and at six our ship will cast off the stern line.

October 21.—At five-thirty a representative of the gubispolkom appeared to take us to the dock. We got into an old machine on which the chauffeur and a mechanic (every Russian auto has a chauffeur and a mechanic) were working trying to get air into the tires. They got it in but could not keep it there, and after fifteen minutes gave up in despair. As our yacht was to leave at six, something had to be done quickly. Our special guide ran to the telephone, which was very much out of order, to ask for another machine, but before he got up steam we heard a terrific noise and out of a cloud of smoke there appeared as if by magic an auto. A hurried conversation took place between our protector and the newly arrived chauffeur and mechanic, which ended by our being invited to get into No. 2. At the order of "*davai*" ["go!"] there was a loud noise, a cloud of kerosene smoke, and a lurch which took us about one hundred yards, and then a sudden stop. Our two drivers jumped out, held a soviet, and made a declaration that unless fresh air were immediately pumped into the inside tube of the right hind tire the car would surely die. By stopping and pumping from time to time we reached wharf No. 4 about half-past six. Our guide left us to get sailors to take our baggage on board. For an hour and a half he and the captain of the port searched the waters adjacent to Saratov for a steamer, the name of which no one knew, to take the Americans to Marxstadt, alias Ekaterinstadt. At last a boat answering to the name of "Peter" was found at dock No. 2, and we boarded. Our two Russian companions and Hutchinson and I were given a cabin and were made as comfortable as possible by the captain. He treated us to roast mutton and tea made of dried carrots. We passed a comfortable night and reached Marxstadt early in the morning.

Marxstadt is the capital of the recently (1918) created German state or oblast. A look at the map shows what a queer-looking picture self-determination makes when carried out to its logical conclusion. German and Russian territory adjoin and alternate, run into each other and out again, and here and

there the eye is struck by a small white island in the midst of colored German *gebiet* and vice versa. Were the German oblast and the Saratov guberniia two sovereign states this butting in would lead to trouble and frequent wars, but as they are merely two parts of one state, receiving their authority and their material resource from the same Moscow, there are no complications.

These German colonies were founded by Catherine the Great in 1762 and 1763 on both banks of the Volga. There were at first 102 colonies with 30,666 colonists, men and women. During the middle of the nineteenth century (1843-63) a number of the old colonists were transplanted on new soil to form additional settlements, so that by 1914 there were some 190 colonies on the right and left banks of the Lower Volga, that is to say, in the uiezds of Nikolaevsk and Novouzenski in Samara guberniia, and Kamashinski and (portions of) Atkarsk, Saratov, and Tsaritsin in Saratov guberniia. In 1918 (as was said above) all this territory inhabited by Germans was formed into the separate administrative territory, Oblast Nemtsev Povolzhia. One can trace back the colonists to their original homes through the place names on the Samara side of the Volga—Basel, Zurich, Lucerne, Shafhausen—but for some reason most of the villages on the Saratov side bear Russian names.

In the original grant each German settler was given thirty desiatins of land, was exempted from military service for a period of time, and freed from taxation for thirty years. It should, however, be pointed out that at the time of settlement this part of the river was a frontier outpost and the newcomers had to hold themselves ready to fight the native tribes. The original grant was added to by purchase until it reached one and one-half millions of desiatins by the beginning of the twentieth century. The Germans have more land and farm it better than the Russians in their neighborhood and naturally have better crops and a better opinion of themselves. During the century and a half that the Germans have lived here they

have kept themselves apart from the Russians; they have not even learned their language (this is particularly true of the women). Notwithstanding this aloofness these Germans have been to a great extent influenced by the Russians and by Russia. In the first place, they have taken over the Russian communal system of landholding and have become so much attached to it that when, under Stolypin, they were given the right of dividing up the land, many of the villages would not take advantage of it. In the second place, the Germans are gradually losing their distinctly German features and are looking more and more like the Russians. I was deeply struck by this fact as I walked through the streets of Marxstadt yesterday; had I not known that we were in a German settlement I could not have told it from the appearance of its inhabitants. I put that question to some of the natives and they admitted their resemblance to the Russians, and one man, who was a prisoner of war in Germany remarked that the Germans in Germany commented on his likeness to the Russians and called him a Russian who talked German. This same man said that he was interested to note that the Germans in Germany are as superior to the Germans on the Volga in culture and cleanliness as the latter are to the Russians. This process of physical change (if true) is due to a number of factors, among which are climate, food, and the same mental processes in the ordinary affairs of life. Though more Germans here can read German than Russians read Russian, yet neither are highly developed mentally and both spend the greater part of their lives thinking and talking about horses, cows, pigs, and land.

Because of their exclusiveness and air of superiority the Germans on the Volga were regarded with suspicion by the tsarist government, and during the last fifty years a special effort has been made to Russianize them, but with little success. When the old régime was overthrown the Germans were rather pleased, but at the same time were not very enthusiastic revolutionists. They had a very high respect for the rights of property and did not reach out to grab what was not theirs.

The Provisional Government left them in peace, and they prospered, the year 1919 being one of the best on record. In 1920 their troubles began. There was a local crop shortage, and the tax collectors were unmerciful. On top of this came the drought of 1921, which completed the ruin of the settlers. When, during the late summer months, it became evident that famine was in the land, some of the farmers loaded their families on their carts and wandered off in search of food. Many of them were overtaken by cholera or hunger and perished by the roadside, and those who remained in their villages died of exhaustion. By death and by emigration the German population on the Volga has been reduced in the course of the year (1920-21) from 431,000 to 359,000. But this is not the end, for the cold hungry winter is drawing near and the granaries as well as the stables are empty. The German Volga immigrants in America have raised a special fund which they have added to the sum set aside by the American Relief Administration, and this money will be devoted to the feeding of as many hungry children as possible. The Soviet is also doing what it can to relieve the misery by giving seed for the fall planting, by sending potatoes, by offering to take some of the refugee children to the more fertile provinces, and by promising additional aid. By pulling all together it may be possible to snatch these industrious Germans from the jaws of death and give them a chance to help build up the Russia of the future. In order that there may be no misunderstanding on the subject it should be clearly stated that these Germans do not feel unkindly toward the Soviet.

Hutchinson and I finished our investigations by one o'clock and were ready to leave for Saratov by two, but our departure was delayed as usual. Our passenger list had been considerably increased by Governor Goodrich and Repp (who had reached Marxstadt the night before), with their staff of three men, and by Russian officials of one kind and another. Our two small cabins were crowded, but we did not mind because we expected to reach Saratov in about three hours. Within twelve miles of

our destination we ran into a fog, and the captain refused to move. Our native Volga guests or hosts—it was hard to know what their status was—settled themselves down into comfortable corners and fell asleep. The Governor, Hutchinson, and I played poker, with a place to sleep as stakes. The Governor got an empty corner, Hutchinson the top of a table, and I that part of the lounge that was not occupied. It was very hot in the cabin, but some of our visitor-hosts kept on their overcoats and closed the port holes whenever we were not looking. Some time during the night the fog lifted and we steamed into port. As soon as it became daylight Hutchinson, Tovarisch, and I cleared out and drove away to the station where, to our good fortune, our car, which was to have been moved yesterday, was still in place. The more we go by boat, the happier we are to return to the car, where we have clean water, fresh air, wholesome food, and, last but by no means least, clean toilets.

After breakfast Tovarisch went to see the station master about moving our car to the other side of the river to catch the Astrakhan train tomorrow. He returned with the assurance that it would be done some time toward six o'clock today. On the strength of this assurance, which we mistrusted and yet could not ignore, we canceled our engagement in the city with members of the faculty of the University who had been kind enough to invite us to meet with them. It is now ten o'clock at night and we are still in the station at Saratov, and the latest report is that the car will be moved at five tomorrow morning. I do not believe it, and I am going to make another 10,000 ruble bet with Hutchinson on the subject. I have already bet him three times today and won each time. The first was that more than fifty per cent of the eggs we had for breakfast would be fit to eat, the second that his Corona would be repaired today, and the third that the statistics which were promised a few days ago would not yet be ready. Hutchinson has just offered to bet me that when we get up for breakfast in the morning our car will be on this side of the river. I have taken him up.

October 22.—In the early dark hours of the morning a

terrific jolt caused by the bumping of the engine into our car woke me up. I realized at once that we were about to be moved across the river to Pokrovsk and a 10,000 ruble grin spread over my sleepy face. With this pleasant thought I again fell asleep, but all during my slumbers I was semiconscious of moving and bumping but not of the lapping of the water against the ferry boat. When I awoke at half-past seven we were at a standstill, and I took it for granted that we were across; but when I went out I learned that we were still on the left bank, and immediately reversed the grin. After breakfast Tovarisch went to the station to ascertain just when we should cross, but as he did not return for a considerable time I followed him. He said that the station master had no orders to put us over today and therefore we would have to wait until tomorrow. This will never do, because the weekly train leaves today. I immediately went to Hutchinson and we determined to act vigorously. Armed with all our official documents and seals we started for the station to convince its master that he had to carry out our orders. We had advanced at the most three paces when we saw a locomotive backing toward our car. With cigarettes in hand I approached the conductor and asked his intentions, and he informed me that they were to take us to the ferry. All that Hutchinson could say was: "Alice in Wonderland had nothing on us!" We traveled for a mile or more and then came to a standstill, which gave my conductor friend an opportunity to ask for another cigarette and to say that our car would go on the next ferry. A quarter of an hour later Tovarisch appeared with the news that the station master had changed his tone; he now had the orders, but not the proper ferry; the one in service was not big enough for our car. The three of us had another council and concluded to talk to the commandant of the ferry. His mind was at first made up that we would have to wait until tomorrow when another ferry would be in service; but we insisted that our car should be measured. This argument appealed to the employees in the office, who took a hand and recommended that something

should be done and later insisted that it must be done. The commandant saw the need of yielding and promised that he would himself examine the "wagon." We returned to our home just in time to mount the steps before another locomotive hurried off with it. When we had come to a standstill the commandant appeared and took measurements of the car, which according to him was 33 feet, or just one foot too long. After he left Hutchinson got his string out and found the length, outer-axle to outer-axle, $30\frac{1}{2}$ feet. A half-hour later a special officer from the ferry came with a yardstick and wrote on the car: "31 feet; can be taken across the Volga." It is now noon and no one knows what the next hour may bring forth.

October 22, 7:30 P.M.—From noon until five our car was moved and measured many times, but no two men could agree as to its length and as to whether the ferry could or could not take it on. This important question became a subject of serious discussion for all the onlookers. About three o'clock our house on wheels was pushed down to the ferry, giving the captain an opportunity to pass judgment. He declared that he could not take it because it was not only too long but also too heavy. By this time the commandant of the port, who in the morning had declared that it was out of the question to take the car, now insisted that it should be ferried across. He recommended that the buffers be taken off, and a captain of a company of Red soldiers who listened in offered his men for the service; but the master of the ferry held his ground and we were left behind. The commandant of the port assured us that this ferry has been in service for twenty-five years and during all that time a small iron railing has made it impossible to take on cars over 32 feet long. When I inquired why the railing is not moved he replied, "We have lost all interest in our work."

October 23.—During the night we were bumped around, and this morning we found ourselves as yesterday, at the station Volka, some ten miles from Saratov and near the ferry. We hunted up the officers in charge of the port and the ferries and had our car moved back to the river. About eleven o'clock

loading started, at half-past eleven the lift on the ferry went out of order, at half-past twelve it was repaired, at half-past one our car was put on, and at two o'clock we were across. There was just one chance for some excitement, when the car, which is without brakes, decided to keep on going, but a man who ran alongside brought it to a standstill by throwing a heavy piece of rope in front of one of the wheels. A little after four o'clock we arrived at Pokrovsk.

In the course of the evening, which we spent in Pokrovsk, we had a call from the chairman of the local ispolkom, a lawyer by training. He greatly approves the New Economic Policy and pointed out that the line of demarcation between the industries which the State would take over and those it would leave to private individuals will depend to a large measure on whether the industries in question are more influenced by private initiative or by capital. It is the latter that the State will keep in its own hands. The new policy will enable the government to get rid of many worthless employees and officials which it has cared for until now.

He also discussed the relation of the intelligentsia to the proletariat. In the beginning of the revolution the intelligentsia showed itself hostile, untrustworthy, and had to be replaced by members of the proletariat who had not the proper qualifications for their tasks. This explains the many excesses and misgovernments then and to some extent now. At present the intelligentsia is showing itself more friendly, and the Soviet is more than glad to take it back and put it in important places. At the same time the experience which the proletariat is having in matters of government is developing new leaders. On his own executive committee eleven out of fourteen are peasants and workmen of very limited education but on the whole capable. He himself is not a Communist, but a "without-party-man," and was at one time hostile to the Communist régime. He is not now altogether in agreement with it on all points, but realizes that it is the only party in Russia capable of governing, and consequently supports it. Like thousands of other

Russians he was eager to have our opinion of Russia and what the world thinks of it.

October 24.—Thanks to the railway officials at Pokrovsk, we got away early in the morning. It was a long train of freight cars, *teplushkas* [box cars with stoves], in which were all kinds of people with sacks, a prison car which recalled Iaroshenko's picture, "The Joy of Life is Universal," and three special coaches, of which ours was one. At one station an officer examined the "documents," and those who had not the necessary permits to travel were taken off to be put to work, to be released again, to be rearrested elsewhere, until in the course of time they will reach their destination, provided they have one. At Urbach, where the line turns south, a number of Germans of the neighborhood gathered about us to inquire whether we are the Americans they had heard were coming and whether it is really true that we are going to help. They have been fed by so many false hopes that they no longer believe in rumors and are therefore glad to see us with their own eyes and to hear with their own ears the glad tidings of joy. They have had a bad year; from some *desiatins* not more than twenty pounds of grain were harvested, and even that had to be gathered by hand, each grain separately. The prospects for next year are not bright unless the government supplies them with seed next spring. In normal years the village seeds 5,000 *desiatins*, but this year it has put in 150. Most of the live stock has been traded off or killed for food, and that makes a serious agricultural problem for the immediate future.

Urbach, with its adobe houses, its clear sky, and its sunshine, suggested our agricultural Southwest; but the villages lacked the planted trees which are so common around our ranch houses. The recent rains have given a green tinge to the landscape, but the grass is not high enough for good grazing.

For centuries the Lower Volga has been the back door to Europe for people and commerce coming from Asia, and to a lesser extent it still serves the same purpose. It has all that is needed to attract nomadic peoples—rivers full of fish and plains

rich in grass. It has been fought over more than any other part of Russia. Attila and his Huns established themselves here in the fifth, the Avars in the sixth, the Khazars in the seventh, the Pechenieg in the tenth, the Povlovtsi in the eleventh, the Tartars in the thirteenth, and the Russians in the sixteenth century. But it was two centuries later that the Russians really took possession. The conquered native tribes did not give up their fishing and pasturing rights without a struggle, and the Tsar was not strong enough to bring them to their knees. He had to content himself with high-sounding titles and nominal overlordship. He built a number of fortresses (Samara in 1586, Tsaritsin in 1589, Saratov in 1590), and the troops which he kept there were used for defensive purposes primarily, to guard the few agriculturalists near the fort and to make an occasional excursion east of the Volga to punish the half-wild natives who waylaid Russian traders. It was only during the second half of the eighteenth century, after the Russian military policy had changed from defensive to offensive and after a number of *ostrogs* [forts] had been built in such a way as to block a union of the hostile peoples, that it became possible to settle Europeans on the Lower Volga. In 1762 and 1763 Germans and Swiss as well as Russians were settled in the region of Saratov, but the region which we traversed today was not colonized until after 1836, and that which we shall pass tomorrow not until after 1900, that is to say, after the construction of the railway.

The failure to settle the Lower Volga until so long after it was annexed was due as much to the wild Russians as to the savage Tartars. From the middle of the sixteenth century the Lower Volga was No-Man's-Land, the gathering place of outlaws and criminals who ran away from the more civilized parts of Russia and organized themselves into Cossack bands with leaders of their own choosing. They took their women, their plunder, and their fun wherever they found them, making no distinction between races and creeds. When it suited the purpose of His Majesty he took them into his pay and sent them to fight the Tartars, hoping to get rid of both in this manner. But

these robbers were dangerous allies and occasionally turned on the Tsar himself. The history of the Lower Volga during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries is thus largely a story of revolts cruelly carried on and cruelly put down. In 1670 Stenka Razin terrorized the country and a strong army had to be sent against him. In 1705 the people of Astrakhan rose in revolt because, they said, Peter was giving Russian girls in marriage to Germans and forcing the Russians to shave, to smoke tobacco, and to wear German clothes. Later in the same century Catherine the Great's power was threatened by Pugachov. This was the last of the great uprisings, for after this time the Tsars were strong enough to keep in check the lawless. The Red revolution and the White opposition of our time have made use of the criminal elements of society, both as individuals and as organized bands, have encouraged them to kill and plunder under the pretext of counter-revolution and patriotism, and have turned the once prosperous Volga valley into a land of famine and a country of ruins. They have done more than that: they have let loose all the wild instincts of half-civilized peoples. Life and property are no longer safe east of the Volga. Armed bands, equipped with the latest weapons of modern warfare, hold up the trains on the plains and the small boats on the Caspian, and prey in general on the peaceful and already impoverished agricultural population. The Kalmuks, too, have gone on the warpath and now waylay poor Russian peasants who cross their country in search of food. We were told that there are three armored trains along the Krasni Kut-Astrakhan line, and we ourselves see soldiers at all the important stations of that line, whose duty it is to protect the frontier settlers, just as their ancestors did three hundred years ago on almost exactly the same spots. The civil war of the twentieth century, like that of the seventeenth, is followed by famine, pestilence, and lawlessness, and unless the economic and moral conditions soon change for the better this part of Russia at least will once more become the land of the nomad and the home of wild Cossack bands. With all this demoraliza-

tion staring people in the face there are not wanting Russians who try to make political capital out of it. There are Reds who insist that these robbers are counter-revolutionists, and Whites who claim they are patriots; but to the people who have suffered and with whom we have talked, they are just robbers and pirates.

Our train stops whenever it has a decent excuse for doing so, and when it moves it is seldom at more than ten miles an hour. At Krasni Kut we were held up five hours (because, says the engineer, the block signal was up and the station master could not be found to change it). When at Pokrovsk a special train was offered to take us to Astrakhan, we, knowing that engines were few and freights to haul many, suggested that a limited number of cars should be taken along. When I looked at the train this morning it was already too long to allow any speed, and at Krasni Kut so many other cars were added (making 68 in all) that the engine had all it could do to crawl along.

October 25.—From Krasni Kut to Dzhanybek the distance is not more than 100 miles, but it took us from six last evening until eight this morning. During these fourteen hours we passed out of the government of Saratov into that of Astrakhan, from a semi-arid into an arid region, from the agricultural territory of the Germans into the pastoral lands of the Kirgiz and Kalmuk. In one of the long stops between the short rides I asked the locomotive engineer the reason for the delay in starting yesterday and the slowness of our movements today. The story he gave did not at all agree with the station master's at Krasni Kut. The last-mentioned said that the delay was due to the poor engine; but the former claimed it was due to the failure of the station masters to stay on their jobs at night to let the trains pass.

The country we traversed today is pretty much a desert. Astrakhan has more than 2,000 salt lakes, and the railway passes alongside the two largest—Elton (area 20,000 desiatins) and Baskunchak (10,000 desiatins). Millions of puds of salt have been taken from these two lakes, and the supply seems inex-

haustible. In the car ahead of us there is a party of engineers on the way to Baskunchak to try out some German machinery which they claim will very greatly reduce the cost of producing salt.

We noticed very few settlements today and these were mostly villages and dugouts of the Kirgiz and Kalmuks or some other native tribes, for it is difficult for the untrained eye to catch at once the difference between one people and another. Russians are everywhere in evidence, but not in great numbers; their largest town that came under our observation was Dzhanybek. From the description of it given me by one of the peasants whom I met at the station, Dzhanybek is a regular paradise for the various religious sects who have come here to settle within the last decade or two, that is to say, since the completion of the Krasni Kut-Astrakhan railway.

When we arrived at Baskunchak a little after five it was already dark, but we could see masses of people, women and men, in front of the station and could hear their talking and singing. Among them were many soldiers going or coming, and workmen of the railways. The superintendent of the division happened to be at the station, and we invited him to take a glass of tea. When he came in we were playing solitaire, and as soon as he saw the cards he reached for them as for the hand of a long-lost friend and remarked with a tone of tenderness that it was a long time since he had held them. *Would* we play poker? We said we would. Instead of the "counting marks," as the circulating currency is officially called, we made paper chips of our own and allotted each of the three players the equivalent of 125,000 rubles. We had not been playing more than five minutes when three other important railway officials of Astrakhan came, and our game had to be called off temporarily. We offered our visitors American cigarettes, and they entertained us with Bolshevik politics. Like the hundreds of other Russians we met they were eager to know what we think of Russia and when we will open trade relations with them. Two of the visitors, ably led by our own tovarishch, set

forth with great enthusiasm the virtues of the Communist government and the vices of such a bourgeois *pravitelstvo* [government] as we have in the United States, with its aristocrats and its oppressed labor. As gently as I could I tried to tell them that we are not quite as bad as they thought, and that we, as they, are working to the best of our ability and understanding to bring about peace on earth and good will to men. But this statement they would not accept and came back with the argument that if we really had the welfare of the workingmen at heart we would have a workingmen's government such as Russia has. They kept up this line of talk until ten o'clock, when we parted, the best of friends, to meet again at Astrakhan. Before leaving, our poker friend remarked on the quiet that he would soon be back if the train did not leave. Sure enough in a quarter of an hour he returned with the request that we proceed with the game. By half-past twelve we had cleaned him out of his paper pile. He gave us an I O U on Astrakhan and a promise to take up the game where we left it, and then departed. Soon after, our train started, and I have a suspicion he had held it up these many hours in order to play poker.

The morning after we left Pokrovsk I noticed a soldier on the bumpers of our car. He had a clean and kindly face and in the course of the day helped our porters in various ways. Before retiring the porters allowed him to come inside to sleep in the corridor near the stove. The man told me his story. He is a Ukrainian peasant from Volhynia. In 1913 he joined the colors, fought on various fronts during the German war, and when the revolution broke out he was in Rumania. People talked a great deal, he said, about Bolshevism and Menshevism and Socialism, but he did not know what it all meant and does not quite understand it even now. In 1905 he had a brother who called himself a Social-Democrat, but at that time he was a small boy and it made no impression on him. The ideas of the summer of 1917 did not excite him and he remained at his post like so many other soldiers. In the fall of 1917, as the Russian forces were trying to retreat from Rumania, they were



Top: *A.R.A. delousing station*

Center: *A.R.A. kitchen*

Bottom: *A.R.A. food package remittance*

attacked by the Rumanians, and in one of the fights our hero was wounded and taken to Astrakhan for treatment. During his stay in the hospital the Soviet issued an order demobilizing the soldiers of his class. When he came out of the hospital the Germans entered the Ukraine, making it impossible for him to return home, and therefore he remained at Astrakhan. When the Germans withdrew he went to the proper authorities to get a permit to leave, and from them learned that a new military order had appeared remobilizing his class. He was once more a soldier, this time in the Red Army. Under the red banner he fought all through the "Civil" war. About six weeks ago he married an Astrakhan woman and asked for leave to take his wife to his people in the Ukraine. The two beat their way to Kiev, and there he asked the local commandant for a pass to go to his village. Imagine his state of mind when he learned, for the first time, that the part of Ukraine in which his father and mother, from whom he had not heard for eight years, had lived was in the hands of the Poles. The commandant advised him not to attempt to steal across the border, for if he were caught he would be shot. Under the circumstances he found a position for his wife and left her in Kiev, where she will at least have enough to eat during the winter, and he himself is now returning to his post in Astrakhan. Some day soon he hopes to be released from service, to rejoin his wife, and, if the opportunity comes, to drive the Poles out of his native land. While in the Ukraine he talked with many peasants, who told him of the hardships they suffered last year and the year before at the hands of the tax collectors and how much better off they are today under the new system of a definite assessment. He himself saw peasants standing in line in order to pay quickly their dues and to receive their permits to dispose of the surplus.

October 26.—This morning we passed some really Bad Lands. Here and there as our eyes wandered across the bare spaces we could see camels grazing, and occasionally we were treated to the sight, novel to us, of a cowboy mounted on a camel driving before him cows, sheep, and horses. About eleven

o'clock we came to Kharbalinsk, and a little later to Ashuluk, two Russian settlements. The country about here looks very much like the Yakima and Wenatchee valleys in Washington and as well suited for alfalfa and fruit-growing. There were green fields and fruit trees, and judging from the fact that a lake was near by we concluded that the land was irrigated. The inhabitants have little to offer in the way of food, and during the last two days we have not been able to buy any bread.

October 27.—We reached Astrakhan last evening about seven. We had planned to do the town, but it looked so dark and uninviting that we gave that up. The chairman of the local government and another official called in the course of the evening and arranged for our investigation today. It was agreed that at ten o'clock an automobile should come for us, but when that hour passed and no car showed up, Hutchinson and I decided to foot it. As we were about to leave the railway yard two young men, members of the Cheka, stopped us to say that we would be allowed free movement in the city and that they would be entirely at our service. We needed these special attentions as much as scarlet fever, for Russia is now as safe for the stranger as it was ten years ago; yet for obvious reasons we are never allowed out of sight of a policeman or a spy. This it seems to me is an unwise policy. It gives the impression that there is something to conceal, and puts a restraint on our conversation with the civilian officials. When one knows he is watched he is at a disadvantage. This is especially true when the person who is spying is generally unintelligent and is likely to misinterpret one's meaning. We have nothing to ask and nothing to tell which may not be heard by everyone who is not trying to find hidden meanings. Time and again I have noticed officials and other Russians stop or change their conversation as soon as our liaison officer came near, and yet these men were much more moderate in their statements than some of the Communists themselves. Here as elsewhere, people are against the government, a little more so here because of the hunger and because of the need of a scapegoat; here as elsewhere, people

are for the government, some from honest and others from dishonest motives.

One of the two men who accosted us offered to take us to the gubispolkom, and we accepted his services. On the way he told us that he is an Armenian, and that there are four thousand of his people in Astrakhan, all of them afraid of communism. "I am the only Armenian Communist in Astrakhan," he proudly exclaimed; "I am not afraid." As we walked through the dirty city we realized how shattered it is, more so than any of the other communities we have seen in our travels. Astrakhan was the scene of bloody fighting between Reds and Whites for more than a year, and that tells its own story. On the other hand, the food situation is better here than in the north; and were it not for the thousands of refugees who come down the Volga and make Astrakhan a point of departure or a resting place, this community could almost take care of itself this year from its fisheries and its salt industry.

When we left Moscow we assumed that the tour of investigation could be made in about two weeks, but now three have passed and we are a long way from the end. For that reason we have decided to save time by going from Astrakhan to Tsaritsin and back by water, instead of trying to reach the latter city by the roundabout way of Saratov. Today we asked the gubispolkom for a boat to take us up the river and it was given to us gladly and without any fuss.

We pulled away from the dock at seven-thirty in the evening. When we went into our cabin, whiffed the air, and saw the armies of flies, we hastened on deck to look for a place to spend the night. Unfortunately it began to rain and we had to abandon that plan. There was nothing to do but make the best of it, and we went below to acclimate ourselves. We opened the port holes on both sides and allowed fresh currents of air to fight the flies and purify the atmosphere. A small twelve-candlepower electric bulb lighted the gloomy room and the ikon which faced the door, and by this light we took stock of the furniture—one table in the center, and settees with red

cushions around the walls. These cushions were full of holes, exposing the old straw within, and with their broken springs looked (to our imagination) like a storm on the Red Sea. While we were gazing and wondering whether these red waves concealed any red inhabitants, the first officer called. We ventured to ask, as gently as we dared, so as not to hurt his feelings, whether bedbugs were ever found on Volga steamers. "Bugs!" he exclaimed and, unbuttoning his coat, displayed a bloody shirt; "that's one night's killing." Jacob, when he saw the bloody shirt felt no worse than we. The officer must have caught the look of despair on our faces, for he at once began to comfort us and to tell us how to fight them. "Take cantaloupes," he said, "cut them open, smear yourself all over with the insides, scatter the rind near your blankets, and the bedbugs will not come near you." This sounded encouraging, until in answer to our query for cantaloupes he replied that there were none on board. It was an unpleasant subject, and he tried to change it by leading us into more cheerful lines of thought. He told us that if we closed the port holes and put a can to catch the rainwater which came through, we could be very comfortable indeed; we could even be warm enough to sleep with our coats off. When that failed to bring a smile he gave the history of the boat. It was once called "Vysokogorski Nikolai," after a saint, and belonged, before the revolution, to the Churin Monastery. It was dedicated to the holy cause of carrying saints and sinners from Astrakhan to the shrines of the monastery for prayer and meditation. The cabin which we occupied was reserved exclusively for the abbott, bishops, and other consecrated people. The revolution put an end to all this holiness; the monks were driven off, the abbott arrested, the monastery turned from a house of veneration to one of jollification (theater and circus), and finally into a children's home, and the "Vysokogorski Nikolai," taken over by the godless government, has been going from bad to worse. At first it carried commissars and other distinguished government officials, but the last passengers have been only horse doctors, and now—

he did not finish the sentence, for the captain had sent for him; but he had said enough for us to draw our conclusions as to where we are in the social scale. This humbled us sufficiently and made us thankful that we had a roof, even a leaky one, over our heads. From this moment all went well. On investigation we found that the table had two wings, and on these we spread our blankets. When another officer came to say that his wife would be willing to prepare our food, we were in a fairly contented frame of mind. After supper I went to the pilot house to smoke a cigarette with the captain, the officers, and such members of the crew as were not asleep. They asked the usual questions: "What do the American people think of Russia? Do they believe that the Bolsheviks are a lot of barbarians?" Then they proceeded to talk about the subject uppermost on their minds, that is to say, food. "In time of the Tsar we had enough to eat, but now we are hungry; we wish the old times were back." It was a cry for food and not for a change of government. Someone raised the question as to whether or not the Tsar was dead. On this point the crowd differed. One speaker was certain that the Tsar was no longer living, and claimed that the Communists were of the same opinion. This argument failed to convince the others. A sailor insisted that the Tsar is alive, and gave the following evidence to prove his statement: A Russian soldier who had been a prisoner of war in Germany said that when he and his companions were about to leave for Russia, Nicholas came to the station to see them off and gave each of them a five-ruble note, and this note the soldier showed to him (the sailor). The second officer was also of the opinion that the *Gosudar* [Tsar] was somewhere in Western Europe, and gave this reason: "Every now and then, Bolshevik orators say: 'Suppose bloody Nikolai came back?' If he were dead he could not come back; and if we are to suppose he could come back that means he is not dead; therefore he is alive."

October 28.—When we rolled off our table-bed this morning we found the flies standing guard over us. We at once

declared war on them and for an hour the conflict raged; when it was over, the enemy was in full flight, while we on our side had lost one moccasin, which we had used as a swatter.

October 29.—During the day our boat made considerable headway, but toward evening a wind came up, darkness set in, and the captain decided to anchor so as not to run on a sandbar. Navigation on the Volga at the present time is very difficult because the channel has not been dredged and the shore and buoy lights have not been kept up. When the boat started again, one of the paddles in the wheel broke and some time was spent in repairing it.

October 30.—Instead of reaching Tsaritsin in the afternoon, as we had been promised, we docked at two o'clock in the morning of October 30. We were up early so as to get everything done in a day or two. At nine o'clock Tovarisch called the chairman of the local government, who promised to send for us at once. When at half-past eleven no car had showed up we started to walk and met the straw-burner. We were glad enough to get it, for the rain was pouring down and the streets were lakes of mud. Moscow still sports good automobiles, some new; but the provinces use cars that have seen military service on various fronts—English, French, Denikin, Kolchak, and Wrangel—and by all military regulations should be demobilized. But this is not done, and they continue in service, coughing and sneezing. Their food is kerosene, their shelter a leaky garage or the open sky, their drivers Russian chauffeurs who mistreat them as the *isvozchiks* [cab drivers] mistreat their nags. In another year these veterans of many campaigns will be no more and the only people to weep for them will be the commissars, for they, like the other members of the proletariat, will be obliged to walk or take cheap cabs.

Tsaritsin and its neighbor Tsarev (the capital of the Golden Horde Tartars) are important historical spots. The Russians erected a fort in Tsaritsin in 1589, and it continued to be a military outpost until the end of the eighteenth century, having then a population of 1,130, not counting the Cossacks. It grew

very slowly during the first half of the nineteenth century (population of 1861 was 6,700), but after the freeing of the serfs and the construction of railways it developed rapidly. The war has shorn it of all its glory and has left it in ruins like so many of the other places we have visited. The cities in the Lower Volga are recovering more slowly than those in the Upper Volga. Restaurants and stores were doing business two months ago in Kazan, but in Tsaritsin and Astrakhan they are only beginning to open. We were shown the most important historic place in the historic city, the spot where Denikin hanged the Reds. The ground is fenced in and kept sacred in memory of the fallen and as a warning of what will happen in case the Whites come into power.

The local authorities were wideawake men and gave us without delay the information we needed, making it possible for us to start back to Astrakhan in the afternoon at four o'clock. The rainy day was followed by a beautiful and clear night; but nevertheless our navigators lost their bearings and bumped the "Nikolai," without, however, doing her any serious injury. The boat at Astrakhan, like the locomotive at Pokrovsk, was entirely at our orders, yet without consulting us a shipload of passengers were taken aboard. The passage money was a bit of graft for the officers and crew, and they used it to buy provisions. The poor refugees spent the day sunning, delousing, and watching pots boil; the night they spent sleeping, curled up, each with face and feet under the *shuba* [sheepskin coat].

October 31.—We are making good headway with the help of the current. Navigation is officially closed, yet there are quite a few boats engaged in finishing up odd jobs. The scenery is not sublime by any means; the shores are low and sandy, the trees scrubby, and the scattered villages not particularly picturesque. The beautiful sunshiny day was succeeded by a clear starry night. We navigated between fishing dories, some of which signaled to us their presence by waving lanterns and others by making noises. Our boat had to dodge so as not to run into them or into their nets. About ten o'clock the officers

assured me that we would be in port in about an hour and a half, even if a fog should set in, for they knew the harbor so well that they could find their way blindfolded. I went below to pack, but before I finished there was a dead thud, a loud noise, and the slowing down of the engines. We rushed on deck and found the fifteen-year-old sailor trying to pole off the hundred-ton boat from a sandbar. He was given the help of the engine, but the two together could not budge it. Under the circumstances there was nothing to do but go below, climb on the table, and try to sleep.

November 1.—In the morning we were still sticking, but the captain assured us that in a little while a steamer that usually makes a run in these parts would pull us off. As no steamer came the captain whistled for help, but no help came. Astrakhan with its church steeples and towers was only three miles away, the shore a quarter of a mile distant; yet we could not reach either place because there was not a skiff on board. After some effort we hailed a fisherman who for 100,000 rubles agreed to take a man ashore to telephone. While he was gone, a good-sized steamboat, the "Tsaritsin," drew up to give us a tow. The commander of the rescuer felt important, blamed our captain for his poor navigation, and gave advice and orders how to proceed. Our captain had to eat humble-pie and do as he was told. After a little effort the crew of the "Nikolai" got a rope aboard the "Tsaritsin," but one pull broke it. The next try was with an iron cable. The captain of the "Tsaritsin" became so excited watching the stern of our ship that he neglected to look after his own, which settled on a nice soft sandbar. He coaxed, he shouted "vpered," then he changed the order to "nazad," then he swore a streak of Russian oaths; but the boat paid no attention. It was comfortable and positively refused to move. Our captain chuckled: "The son of a dog, he came here as if he owned the world, and there he sits, and in daylight too." We now had two vessels sticking in the mud and calling for assistance, sometimes together, but more often separately. Their whistles could have been heard for miles, and though dozens

of ships passed in sight none acknowledged our signals of distress. At last toward three in the afternoon another steamer hove to and passed a line to the "Tsaritsin" and the same thing happened to it as to the "Tsaritsin." Soundings had not been taken, and number three fell in line with numbers two and one. From now on the three raised together the cry of alarm, and one could have imagined that there was a storm raging, and that we were about to be engulfed. Our cries were heard, and as I looked to my left I saw a small launch speeding to our rescue as if to say, "Hold on, I am coming; courage, be not afraid!" The refugees said that it was coming to pull the "Nikolai" off, but I, feeling our importance, was pretty certain that it was hastening to take us off. It kept approaching but had hardly come within swearing distance when something happened and the crew rushed on deck and grabbed poles. The poor launch was stuck too. I turned my face toward the right, hoping deliverance would come from that quarter. Sure enough a good-sized tug was gently feeling its way toward the "Nikolai." Surely, this boat will either pull us off, or at least will take off its two most distinguished passengers! When it came within forty feet of us it called for a line, and—though it sounds incredible it is yet true—for twenty minutes the officers and crews of the two ships tried in vain to get the throw line across. The captain of the tug left the wheel and took a hand in the throwing contest, but, like a bad penny, the throw rope always came back to him. While he was doing this the tug quietly drifted a bit to one side, picked out a soft seat, and sat down. It was the most tragic-comic scene that I have ever witnessed. Five members of the R.S.F.S. Republic fleet sticking in the mud, and not one of them equipped with a skiff to take a line or to send someone ashore to telephone for assistance. The only thing they did was whistle and beg for help from passers-by. The launch at length managed to get free of the sand, and like a whipped cur ran away at full speed with its tail between its legs. I next turned to the tug. After a good deal of chugging and pushing it got its stern off the sand, and

telling us to go to the place where there are no sandbars, steamed away for Astrakhan. The three big ones renewed their bawling as if afraid to be alone. We hired another fishing-boat and sent an officer to town to raise the lid off something and get us out of this mess. He returned at six-thirty on the steamer "Michael," the admiral of the R.S.F.S.R. fleet, and the assurance that this time the "Nikolai" would be pulled off and we should reach the railway station in time to catch the weekly passenger train. The "Michael" made use of the fishing dory to pass pre-war rope cable to the "Nikolai," and at the first pull it snapped. From the "Nikolai" the "Michael" moved to the other ships, and broke a cable with each of them. We feared every moment that it too would go aground, and therefore appealed to the captain of the "Michael" to take us on board and to Astrakhan before anything else happened. He sent the fishing-boat and brought us to the "Michael." Before starting for Astrakhan, the captain, who was a bit of a wit, said that for auld lang syne he was going to break a cable or two with the boys, which he did, and after that we steamed away and reached Astrakhan. From the pier we took droshkas and drove to the station, arriving there too late for the passenger train. We were, nevertheless, glad to come back to our car, the only home we have had for two months, to take off our well-inhabited clothes and have a wash.

For seven years the Volga has not been dredged, ships have not been repaired, small boats have not been replaced, new cables have not been put on, lights have not been kept up, engines have not been overhauled, and crews have not been trained even to the point of being able to get a throw rope from one ship to another. This accounts for and explains the tragic comedy of errors which we witnessed today.

November 2.—We spent the morning visiting the bazaars and calling on officials for needed information. From three until nine o'clock we received calls from members of the local government and others of more or less importance, among them being a railway official. He complained of the shortage of labor,

especially skilled labor, and laid the blame to the smallness of pay. He told us also something of the fight that took place in Astrakhan between the Cossacks and the Reds. The Cossack army was made up of Russians, Kalmuks, and Kirgiz, poorly organized, but fairly well equipped. The Reds were better organized but not so well supplied with artillery. The Cossacks held the station, the Reds the Kremlin, and for two weeks the fight went on, neither side being able to drive the other out. At the end of the time the Kalmuks and Kirgiz gave way, drawing with them the Cossacks, and the retreat became a stampede. Horses and equipment were left behind, especially the artillery, of which the Reds were greatly in need.

Representatives of workmen who came to see us expressed a sincere wish that America should establish trade relations with Russia and send locomotives and other machinery needed for building up Russian agriculture and industry. They had confidence in the Soviet and in its ability to reorganize Russia economically. In the course of the day the local authorities sent to our car provisions, among which were fish and caviar. In the evening the head of the gubispolkom came to see us off and to thank us for coming. He is from the workingmen and seems capable and businesslike. Like so many other officials he is very busy with conferences and trying to run his government on an insufficient amount of paper counters.

From the tips we gave them, our porters had saved up enough money to buy 25 puds of salt, intending to trade it off on the way for flour to take to their families in Moscow. When they brought the salt to the car an agent of the Cheka confiscated it on the ground that the export of salt from Astrakhan is a government monopoly.

November 3.—Some time in the dark hours of this morning a freight train began to bump our car and we took leave of Astrakhan, the most important historic city in Southern Russia, the capital of Khazars and Tartars, which, even in the year 1921, has preserved the character of its former rulers. The East and West still meet here and it is not always easy to tell

one from the other. The Tartars, Kalmuks, and Kirgiz, the swarthy Cossacks, the robber bands, the camels, the undersized ponies, the desert, the burning summer winds, the killing winter blasts, the famine and the pestilence, all these take the mind back to Attila and to the Middle Ages, and one naturally becomes discouraged at the slow rate of progress the world is making and at the way it slides back into primitiveness.

November 5.—Our journey since leaving Astrakhan has been uneventful. It has been rainy and snowy and even if the car did leak we have not been uncomfortable. Yesterday we had a few minutes of excitement. Our train had been moving slowly but steadily, and at six o'clock Hutchinson, the careful economist and cautious statistician, figured out that at the rate we were going we would not be in Krasni Kut before one o'clock in the morning. He was so sure of it that he bet 10,000 rubles that we would not be in before eleven. We got in at nine. Tovarisch went at once to the station master and asked that we be speeded on our way, and returned with the usual discouraging report. We sent for the station master, and a young and sickly looking chap appeared. After we had made our position clear he promised to send us away in two hours, as soon as the freight from Pokrovsk arrived and its engine could be hooked on to our car. He became communicative and told us that he had prepared himself for the university but the war interfered and now he has to be a drudge the rest of his life. He complained of the difficulties the railway is undergoing now: The men are without interest and ambition, they do not care whether the trains run or not, whether they themselves live or die; they do their tasks in a slovenly manner because they have to, for if they do not they are arrested and put into the army or into the jail. The situation seems to him discouraging and hopeless. We gave him some medicine which he needed, and he left us full of thanks and promises. At eight o'clock this morning we were about thirty versts from Krasni Kut and I judge that we pulled out about five or six in the morning.

We arrived at Anisovka, the station nearest the ferry at one o'clock, and were told that the boat had been waiting for us two hours. Eight hours later it showed up. Twelve hours later we were at Saratov.

While we were waiting near the ferry a young peasant came up to inquire when America will send plows and tractors to Russia, for without them the famine will not be conquered. He had been for six years a prisoner of war in Germany and had formed a very high opinion of the German people and of German efficiency. He returned to Russia with the intention of introducing some of the new methods in his own village, but he cannot get the necessary tools or the co-operation of the peasants. When he told them how the Germans tilled the soil they said: "If we should work our land in that manner we would not get any crop at all."

He said that while he was a prisoner of war Communists in the guise of escaped prisoners came and told the soldiers how well everything was in Russia, how every village was lighted by electricity, and more such things. He hoped that it was true, but on his return he was greatly disappointed to find that the villages did not even have kerosene. The homecoming was the most painful experience he had ever had. He did not recognize the Russia he had left. He found himself mentally a stranger in his own village and in his own household. He is now working on his land and as a section hand on the railway. In return for his services the railway management has given him and twenty-five other laborers (men and women) a freight car to go to Tambov to trade for bread such things as they have. He expects that the round trip will take about a month. The men and women are all in the same car and, he said, the coarse language used by his companions in the presence of the women gets on his nerves. "In Germany the men did not do that."

On the same train on which we came from Astrakhan were also fourteen freight cars full of demobilized soldiers. One of them came across on the ferry, and as he was almost bare-footed Tovarisch let him come into the car and sleep in the corridor.

He joined the army in 1915, fought on different fronts, was near Petrograd during the March revolution, opposed Kornilov in the fall of 1917, was demobilized in 1918, was remobilized in 1919 into the Red Army, fought in its ranks, and more recently has been detailed to do all kinds of work. Aside from his paper of honorable discharge he was given nothing else on the way, not even money enough to buy bread, and now, after six years of service, he is going home to Saratov where the famine is at its worst.

November 8.—We left Saratov Sunday (November 6) at four o'clock and expected to reach Moscow last night at six, but actually arrived this morning at one. At nine we telephoned from the station to the American Relief Administration office for an automobile. When we got into it I told Tovarisch, "Now we will have a ride in a real car that does not break down." We rode ten minutes and then got a flat tire. The American Relief Administration is becoming Russianized quickly.

IV

THE UKRAINE

(NOVEMBER 25—DECEMBER 6, 1921)

November 25, 1921.—There is a cry for help from the Ukraine. The granary of Russia is empty and the inhabitants are suffering from hunger and the terrors of bandit raids. Hutchinson and I have been detailed to investigate, and after the usual delays we got away last night in a small second-class car at the tail end of a long train. The car has a flat wheel, and as we sit around the table to eat our schi we realize the truth of the saying, "there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." At three o'clock we reached Briansk, where a prison car was hooked on to the rear of our car to keep us company and steady.

November 27.—We arrived at Kiev yesterday about one o'clock in the afternoon. This city, situated on wooded hills, is more beautiful than the other Russian cities we have visited until now. Since the Bolshevik revolution Kiev has changed hands fourteen times, and that gives an idea of the fighting and the destruction it has suffered; and yet its ruins are not flaunted in one's face as those of Samara, Astrakhan, and other Volga towns. Kiev, the cradle of Russian culture and Christianity, the city of shrines and pilgrimages, the ancient seat of learning, has now become a provincial town. It is not even the capital of the Ukraine. That honor has been conferred on upstart Kharkov, and it is not quite clear whether this was done to punish Kiev for its resistance to Bolshevik rule, or to reward Kharkov for its loyalty. But neither the Whites nor the Reds can deprive "the mother of Russian cities" of her historic traditions, of her beautiful location overlooking the Dnieper, or of her marked individuality.

As soon as we could we reported at the gubispolkom. The chairman was busy at a party conference and we were received by his understudy. When we explained our mission and the

fact that our organization had made certain agreements with Moscow, he asked rather resentfully why we did not first go to Kharkov instead of coming to Kiev. We realized then, and learned more fully later, that Kharkov is rather jealous of Moscow. On paper it looks as if the Ukraine and Russia are equals, but all this federation is merely a make-believe. The government in Moscow is for all practical purposes *The Government*, and the so-called federated states take orders from Moscow, unwillingly, to be sure, but they take them nevertheless. This unwillingness and resentfulness is particularly true of the Ukraine where separatist tendencies have been very strongly developed in recent years among the intelligentsia. The extremists have been driven from the country; and the nationalists that have remained are divided into two camps, those, like Petliura, who expect to attain their ends with the aid of Poland, and those who are opposed to any working agreement with the Poles and desire federation with Russia, but federation as equals. The Ukrainian nationalist movement has made great headway during the last ten years, partly because of the stupidity of the old government in trying to suppress it by force and partly because of the propaganda carried on by the Central Powers. The Ukrainian nationalist movement has little to recommend it. There is less physical difference between the North and South Russians than between the North and South Germans, or Italians. For many years the movement was limited to a few parlor nationalists, socialists, and other disgruntled professors and students; but when the authorities tried to suppress it the number of the nationalists increased. But it was a very small number at best. At the time of the outbreak of the war probably ninety-nine per cent of the inhabitants of Russian Ukraine were untouched by the nationalist movement. Soon after the beginning of the conflict, when many Russian prisoners fell into the hands of the Central Powers, a committee of East Galician nationalists proposed to do propaganda work among the Russian Ukrainians and turn them against Russia. This proposition was accepted by Austria and Germany, and a

fund was placed at the disposal of the Galicians to carry on their work. The Russian revolution with the propaganda of self-determination, also the establishment of a separate Ukrainian government by the Germans, and the creation of a Ukrainian state with definite boundaries, have all helped to spread the idea of nationalism among the lower classes. A Ukrainian soldier with whom I talked the other day told me that he thought that Petliura was the first to call the people in Southern Russia "Ukrainians"; and that there was a man by the name of Shevchenko who did something, but he did not know what; and that he believed in a federation, but he did not know what kind. The local politicians and office seekers may be depended upon to spread the separatist idea and stand in the way of a strongly centralized Russia.

From the gubispolkom we went sightseeing and climbed the snowy and wooded heights of the city park, from which we viewed the glorious sunset and its reflections on the gilded domes to the west, and the icy Dnieper and white plains to the east. It was a beautiful picture and left a memorable impression of Kiev. We slipped down the hill and after some search found a restaurant kept by an Armenian who received us like long-lost brothers. He offered us things to eat, also things to drink. When we questioned the quality of the firewater, he laid his hand on his heart and said, "I would not deceive you, I am not a Russian." It shows more than anything else how low Russian prestige has fallen when a fawning Armenian dares make such a statement. After dinner we went to the opera, where part of a "loge" had been reserved for us. The singing as well as the dancing was very creditable, but the work of the orchestra was damnable. There was little discipline, and the leader was obliged more than once to ask the musicians and their wives and sweethearts with them to stop their conversation and to cease disturbing the audience and the actors.

This morning we had our conference with the officials in regard to the establishment of stations for distribution of food packages. Everything that we asked was promised and we hope

the promise will be kept. After luncheon we took in the sights in an automobile which the gubispolkom placed at our disposal, a Pierce-Arrow that had been captured from one of the White generals. We visited the Lavra and the catacombs and later the Cathedral of St. Vladimir. We proved to our own satisfaction that the stories we have heard that the Bolsheviks destroyed the former and the Poles the latter are not true. A few shots had hit them but they were chance shots. Of the two institutions St. Vladimir, though a comparatively new edifice, shows wear and lack of upkeep more than the Lavra.

Late in the afternoon I called on one of the University professors to whom I had a letter of introduction. His rooms were as cold as the out-of-doors, and he complained that he had received no pay since last June and that he had but little means on which to live. Professor Ikonnikov, the author of that scholarly *Historiography of Russia*, a man eighty years of age, is without fuel in his home and unable, though mentally vigorous, to continue his work. The hand of the educational censor is heavier in the small towns than in Moscow. In Kiev there is not a single bookstore, except the propaganda shop, while in Moscow bookstores are numerous. Certain courses are forbidden to be taught in Kiev, and in order to get around the regulations the teachers are forced to resort to subterfuge.

We learned something about the "banditti" that infest the Ukraine. These bandits are the results of the war and the revolution. When they first came to notice they were known as "Green Bands" in charge of tsarist officers fighting for a political object. Gradually, however, the control slipped out of the officers' hands and fell into those of men less scrupulous. Banditry is more common in Little Russia than in Great Russia because the latter has had a reign of law a much longer time than the former. The Ukrainian is the descendant of the unruly Cossack and still chafes under discipline. His lawless inclinations are just now encouraged by counter-revolutionists, by adventurers from neighboring states who are casting lustful glances on the rich resources of Southern Russia, and by the

merciless tax collectors. It seems that the inhabitants make a distinction between "banditti," robbers pure and simple, and "partisantsi," political enemies of the Soviet. The latter are supported to a certain extent by the Petliura crowd and by the peasants who oppose the government grain tax. They have succeeded in making trouble for the authorities and the Jews.

Food in Kiev is cheaper than on the Volga or in Moscow, but even in the Ukraine the cost of living is going up. Black bread sold for 1,000 rubles a pound a month ago and now it cannot be bought for less than 2,500. In this part of the Ukraine the harvest has not been particularly good and there is not a large surplus of food on hand. The grain tax is heavily resisted and it is a serious problem for the authorities. Food can be bought on the market for paper money of small denominations. Some of the peasants and even not a few of the dealers are afraid to take big bills with which they are unfamiliar, and many peasants refuse to take paper at all and demand manufactured articles.

It would seem that the representative of the Soviet working with the American Relief Administration in Moscow has instructed the liaison officer who is watching us and over us that we should not leave Kiev without his permission. When we reached that city on Saturday we asked Tovarisch to telegraph at once to Moscow of our intention to go to Kharkov. For some reason or other the telegram was not sent until Sunday noon, and as we had planned to leave Monday morning it was quite obvious that no reply could reach us on time. The next train was Thursday. Meanwhile Tovarisch was taken ill and had to go to bed. Under the circumstances we took up the matter with the local authorities, who arranged for us to go Monday and not wait for the permission of Moscow. Just as the train was about to start a number of disbanded soldiers rushed our car and filled the little hallway. When they learned who we were and what our mission is they excused themselves and went to look for a place elsewhere. Two of them remained near the fire. They were loyal Red soldiers, satisfied with the Soviet

because it gave them land but glad to leave the army to return to farming and the rearing of a family. They were very strong in their condemnation of the "banditti" who "are worse than anarchists." When I asked what the difference was between a bandit and an anarchist they replied that a bandit has an object—robbing and killing, an anarchist has none; a bandit has discipline, an anarchist none. One of our porters, a very clever and witty chap, who is so friendly and talkative that we begin to suspect that he has been put on our trail to lead us on, put our two soldiers, "the defenders of the revolution" as he called them, to work sawing wood and looking after the furnace. This they did all night and kept the car so hot that we could hardly sleep. Some time toward four in the morning we were awakened by an intruder who passed the soldiers and the porters and got into our compartment before he was stopped.

November 29.—This morning we reached Poltava many hours late, for we were detained by a wreck just ahead. A freight train broke in two and one half of it ran into another train. At the station there was a large mob of men and women with bags and baskets trying to get on. They had tickets, but there was no room for them and all their pushing, swearing, and pleading was in vain.

December 1.—We arrived at Kharkov late Tuesday night. Yesterday afternoon we went, by appointment, to call on the head of the gubispolkom, but he did not appear on the excuse that he had a conference. We stated to one of his subordinates the object of our visit, that is to say, the making of arrangements for the distribution of food parcels and the investigation of the food situation in the Ukraine. He answered all our questions with a barrage of words and, realizing that there existed a situation which we did not understand, we made our excuses and left, having arranged that today, December 1, we should have a conference with a representative of the Ukrainian government. This morning we learned that the time of said conference was set for twelve-thirty, and at the hour we presented ourselves. Unfortunately for us, the President of the

Republic, Dr. Rakovsky, was out of town and in his place was *Tovarisch Skripnik*, Commissar of Internal Affairs, apparently an upstart in politics, and a man who seems to have a very high opinion of his diplomatic skill. We explained our mission, mentioned the fact that the A.R.A. had concluded two agreements with the R.S.F.S.R. regarding the feeding of the hungry and the distribution of food packages, and concluded by asking the hearty co-operation of the Ukrainian government in carrying out the work. In his reply we were given to understand, much to our astonishment, that the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic is not a party to the said agreements and consequently not bound by them. Nevertheless the U.S.S.R. would be glad to let the A.R.A. work in its territory, but on condition that agreements be concluded with it similar to those made with the R.S.F.S.R. We pointed out that, in the first place, we have no power to conclude agreements; and, in the second place, the agreements already made by the A.R.A. with the R.S.F.S.R. are sufficient for our purposes. At least that was the understanding of the contracting parties. He remarked, good-naturedly, that we were poorly informed, that the Ukraine and Russia are two different states, and that though federated, the union between them is not of such a character as to make agreements concluded by one binding on the other, that each state has its own diplomatic agents and power to negotiate treaties. Realizing that the discussion of juridic questions was not leading us the way we wished to go, we put a straight question to him whether or not his government was willing that the A.R.A. should carry on its work in the Ukraine in accordance with the agreements already made between the A.R.A. and the R.S.F.S.R. The commissar replied that he could not take upon himself to answer offhand this important question, that he must first consult his colleagues, and that if we would return Saturday at one o'clock he would have an answer for us. With this, the conference broke up.

In the evening we were invited to dine and to meet a number of educated men, formerly professors in Russian universities.

From them we learned many interesting things. They told us that the banditti have been at work ever since 1917, that is, since the disorganization of the Russian armies. Many of the deserting and disbanded soldiers never returned to the hard peasant labor, but lived off the country. The revolution and the civil war gave them a great field for their work, and they co-operated with any organization that promised plunder. Since the end of the civil war they have worked in bands and they have received certain support from the peasants who last year resisted strongly the requisitioning by the government. The peasants, however, have come to realize that banditti are ruinous luxuries and are refusing to encourage them, especially this year when requisitioning has been done away with. But banditry has not come to an end entirely, and in some respects has assumed some of the forms of sport. Often the young bucks of the different villages make a raid on a certain place, kill the Communists, and plunder the government stores; sometimes wreck a train. It is interesting to note that certain legends are gathering around these robbers. Some have it that they take from the thievish government and give to the poor, or that they rob the rich Jews for the sake of the poor Christians, etc. Our hosts were agreed that these robberies are thoroughly destructive, and that no good can come of them, and that all those who encourage them are doing harm to Russia; that the hatred of the Jews is growing as the dislike of the Soviet increases, because of the prominent part the Jews are playing in administration affairs. By nationalizing everything, many new offices have been created, and filled by Jews because there were not enough properly qualified Russians. Many of these Jews have had an opportunity to lord it over the Russians and whenever a chance offers itself to get even, the Jews are attacked. For example, the statistical bureau was afraid to send out Jews into the country to take the census knowing that they would be killed.

We learned another interesting thing. Many of the Russian intelligentsia who oppose the Soviet and many of the Jews who are afraid of pogroms are moving close to the Rumanian

and Polish frontiers in the hope that an invasion will come from that direction, which will bring them into the territory of another state. The desire to get out of Russia is so strong that some people prefer to hang and starve along the border rather than accept a position in the interior.

Without complaining or whining, our hosts painted to us a pitiful picture of the suffering of the educated classes. They told of professors who have committed suicide, who have lost their minds because they could not endure the humiliation and the physical suffering. The future seems cheerless and hopeless, for each year the economic situation grows worse. For example, the failure of the crop in Odessa is discouraging the peasants from farming (only one-eighth of the normal seeding this year), and they are becoming traders and speculators. Fish in the Black Sea cannot be caught because there are no nets; grain cannot be moved from one place to another because the railways have broken down; houses are falling down but no new ones are constructed. Where is all this going to end? Why does not America come to the aid? We explained that if America does not help more, it is not because of lack of good will; that we are not alone to blame; that even the A.R.A. efforts, small as they are, are not altogether welcome, as for example, our reception by the Ukrainian government today. They realized that and explained to us that the Communists suspected that our organization was in Russia not so much to help the poor as to spy out the land and to overthrow the government. We pointed out to them the American Relief Administration's record in Central Europe, where we helped much without interfering politically and withdrew just as soon as our work was done. They agreed with us that our objects are honorable, but emphasized the fact that the Soviet judges everything by its own standard. Since it is planning to overthrow capitalistic governments it assumes that these governments are scheming to overthrow it; that in the class struggle all those who are not of its faith are its enemies. It was nearly ten o'clock when we took leave of this group of scholars. In our generation

no people have been so tried as the Russians, especially the educated classes. Their number is each day growing smaller, and if no change for the better comes soon, there will be none of them left.

December 2.—We have been looking over the town, which is in poor condition, though at one time it aspired to be a modern city. In attractiveness it does not compare with Kiev, but because it is the center of industries and has a large proletarian population it has been selected as the capital. It is more lawless than any other Russian city we have been in. One member of our party had his pockets picked; one porter was robbed, but succeeded in capturing the robber. We have bought five different lamps and were cheated five different times, and we are now back to candles.

December 3.—Today at one-thirty we had another conference with Tovarisch Skripnik. He told us that, though he and his colleagues had not met officially, yet they had talked over the question of the work of the American Relief Administration in the Ukraine, and in their name as well as his own he welcomed the organization and assured it every co-operation in its work of relieving the sufferings of the needy population, particularly in the region of the Black Sea, where, according to latest reports, the food situation is much more serious than was at first believed. A few practical details, he said, are yet to be arranged between the American Relief Administration and the Ukrainian government, such as the question of warehouses, offices, living-quarters, guaranties of one kind and another; and just as soon as these minor matters are disposed of, the American Relief Administration can commence its great humanitarian work. We knew, of course, he added, that the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic is an independent state, with laws, administrative system, and a police system of its own, and therefore any agreement made must conform to its peculiar institutions.

When he had gone on in this manner for some time, hinting at a separate agreement but not coming to the point, we said

that we desired no other guaranties than those provided for in the agreement between the R.S.F.S.R. and the American Relief Administration. "But," he interrupted, and pointed to the Riga agreement lying before him, "I find here nothing about the Ukraine, naturally so because the Ukraine is not part of Russia, though we are on the best of terms with her, our neighbor." We replied that when the contract was made we were given to understand that the U.S.S.R. was a part of the R.S.F.S.R. and that any agreement made by the latter was binding on the former. "You are poorly informed," he declared, and stated that we should treat the two states as equals and make with the U.S.S.R. an agreement similar to the one concluded with the R.S.F.S.R. We pointed out that we could not discuss the political relations of the two states and that our mission was to feed the hungry.

"But you are discussing politics," he exclaimed, "when you differentiate between the two republics; when you treat with one and refuse to do so with the other; when you regard one as a sovereign state and the other as a subject state." We demurred from this interpretation, begged to be excused from the discussion of these juridic questions, and asked for a definite answer to the question whether the American Relief Administration could or could not work in the Ukraine in virtue of the agreements already concluded with the R.S.F.S.R. If it could not, it was our duty to refer the matter at once to our headquarters in Moscow for consideration; and until the question was settled there, no relief work could be undertaken in the Ukraine. "I understand then that you refuse to help our suffering people." We denied the inference and reiterated that we were ready to do relief work, but not to talk about separate agreements, which were matters of policy and determined by our headquarters. "Very good," he said; "you will write to Mr. Hoover that the American Relief Administration should make a separate agreement with the U.S.S.R. and he will empower you to do so. But all this writing will take up time which is needed for the relief of the hungry. I propose, therefore,

that we come to a temporary agreement now, to remain in force until the conclusion of the official understanding later when you hear from Citizen Hoover." We pushed aside both the assumption and the proposal as courteously as we could. "I do not understand you," he declared; "you came here of your own initiative to work in the Ukraine; you addressed yourself to its officers of state, and by doing so you *ipso facto* recognized the independence of the U.S.S.R.; and yet you are not willing to treat it as an independent state."

This line of argument obliged us to go into the history of the American Relief Administration in Russia. We made it clear that we did not force ourselves on anybody, but were asked to come; that certain guaranties and promises were made to the American Relief Administration by the R.S.F.S.R. which the world as a whole regarded as binding on the south as on the north of Russia; that by virtue of these assurances we came to the Ukraine; that we called on the officers of the government to pay our respects and to inform them of our plans to feed the hungry. However, since reaching Kharkov we have discovered a new point of view and a difference of opinion as to whether or not the American Relief Administration has or has not authority to carry on its operation in the Ukraine. The Ukrainian government takes the stand that it has not, and if this contention is upheld then the American Relief Administration will stay out of the Ukraine. If the Ukraine desires to have the assistance of the American Relief Administration on the basis of a separate agreement it will have to go about it in the same way as in the case of the R.S.F.S.R.

Our commissar came back once more to the proposal that a temporary agreement be made to remain in force until Hoover had acted on the question, but we told him that we had no authority to do what he asked. After this he stood up, which, in royal etiquette, meant that we were dismissed. But we still had several practical questions to put to him. What should be done with the food parcels either already in Kiev or on the way there? Would he help us to get our report to Moscow by wire?

Should we go on with our investigations? To each of these questions he gave an evasive answer.

December 4.—Today I had a long conversation with two members of the medical faculty, one a woman. In the guberniia of Kharkov the birth-rate between the years 1896–1913 was about 45 to the thousand and the death-rate in the neighborhood of 26 to the thousand; in 1917 the birth-rate had dropped to 25 and the death-rate to 21 to the thousand. Since that time the birth-rate has continually declined and the death-rate risen. In three of the country districts for which there are statistics, 20,709 died and 13,173 were born during the year 1920. During the same year 12,126 (or 45 to the thousand) died and 6,068 (or 22.4 to the thousand) were born in the city of Kharkov. The decrease in birth-rate is due to many causes, among which is abortion. This practice has greatly increased in recent years, so much so that the Soviet has had to take notice of it and prohibit it in private homes. It has been decreed that those desiring to undergo the operation must report to a certain place and state their case, and if it receives the approval of the examiners a permit is issued and the operation takes place in a hospital. The result of this decree has been to fill the hospitals, without, however, doing away altogether with the practice in private homes. The woman professor said that she was worn out by the number of her women students who had come to her for permits and who put up such a pitiful plea of inability to support a child that she was forced to grant their petitions. Until the outbreak of the war abortion was unknown in the village, but the war made Red Cross nurses out of country girls, who have returned to their rural homes to become midwives and to practice abortion. Another cause of the low birth-rate and high death-rate is the spread of venereal diseases. The breaking down of the religious and moral restraints have also contributed to the present decrease in population. Typhus cases have increased a hundredfold, owing to the unsanitary conditions, the overcrowding of cars and trains by people going from place to place in search of food. Other diseases, such as small-

pox, cholera, diphtheria, dysentery, and tuberculosis, have also greatly increased. In one of the children's homes in the district of Iziuma a medical examination showed that ninety-seven per cent of the inmates are tubercular. It seems unbelievable but my informers insisted that the figures were accurate.

Doctors are so poorly paid that it is difficult to get them out into the country; those that go have no horses and cannot, therefore, visit many patients. There is a great shortage of drugs and instruments. Medical knowledge is on the decline; the doctors of the older generation are breaking down from overwork and undernourishment, and the younger doctors are poorly trained. During the war two- and three-year medical students were given diplomas, but the present medical students have even less training. Because of their poverty they must work their way through college under very trying circumstances. They have poor quarters to live in and no place to study. There are no textbooks, no good laboratories, no instruments, no classrooms. Time and again classes are not held because the lecture room is too cold. In the clinics patients cannot be asked to take off their clothes in cold rooms, and the tongue is the only part of their bodies they can expose. This is the kind of medical training the Russian doctors of the immediate future are getting.

December 6.—Yesterday morning at ten o'clock we left Kharkov for Moscow, and this morning at the same hour we are at Tula, hoping to reach our destination some time today. Our invasion of the Ukraine was not altogether a success and like the armies of the Central Powers we have learned that the riches of the Ukraine are mostly underground. Kiev, Volhynia, Podolia, Chernigov, Poltava had harvests varying from fair to very good, but the other guberniias of the Ukraine had harvests varying from poor to almost nothing; this is especially true of the regions along the shores of the Black Sea. Taking the Ukraine as a whole there is enough food to feed every person in that republic under normal conditions; but normal conditions do not obtain.

V

THE UKRAINE

(DECEMBER 11, 1921—JANUARY 14, 1922)

December 11-12, 1921.—Immediately on my return from Kharkov with Golder, I reported the impasse with which we had been confronted there. Haskell took the matter up at once with the Russian authorities and was told that the difficulty was merely a minor political one with the Ukrainian government; that it had already been adjusted; and that I was free to return to the south at once to continue my inquiry.

Monday, December 12.—After making necessary preparations, I left the Pink House about 9:30 P.M. with Mathews and Lindsay, who were going to Kharkov to open a district office there. Arriving at the station, found the usual confusion and uncertainty as to when the train would leave. Discovered also that one of our *provodniks* [porters] had chosen today to take a holiday and was nowhere to be found. Also that the government had for some reason decided to send two "interpreters" ("trailers," we called them) with us this time instead of one as usual. This crowded our quarters somewhat, but there was nothing to do but make the best of it. Got away for the south about 11:00 P.M.

December 13.—Nothing of especial note. Country well covered with snow and apparently the winter seeding well protected.

December 14.—Reached Kursk some time during the night and on getting up this morning discovered that our car and the five cars of food which Mathews was taking down to Kharkov for the purpose of starting feeding operations had been detached from our train, which had proceeded without us. On inquiry, we were told that they had been taken off "because the train had more than the number of cars allowed by the regulations." Elbert, our chief "trailer," buzzed about in his usual

energetic fashion and after a while came back and reported that he had seen the Cheka, had ordered the arrest of the offending train man, and arranged that we should be attached to the "fast train," which would be along about 3:30 P.M. About three o'clock preparations began to be made for attaching our sleeping car, but no move was made in regard to the five food cars. Mathews got busy and through Elbert learned from the station master that as the three-thirty train was a fast train the food cars could not go by it—again quoting the regulations. This was so contrary to the Riga agreement that I immediately took the stand that unless the food cars were taken with us we would turn back ourselves and return to Moscow. More conferences between Elbert and the Cheka, which resulted in the discovery by someone that the five cars which Mathews had supposed to be our food cars contained nothing but general merchandise and that the food cars had not been part of the train when we left Moscow! Under these circumstances there was nothing for us to do but go on, and we got away on the three-thirty train at about four o'clock.

December 15.—Arrived at Kharkov about 2:00 A.M. As I had gathered all the information I thought essential in Kharkov on my visit last week with Golder, and as the Soviet authorities had assured Haskell that the difficulty in regard to my visit had been removed, I planned to move on farther south by the earliest train I could get; so immediately after breakfast I made inquiries through Elbert and learned that there would be a train to Sinelnikovo at eleven-thirty this evening. I accordingly made arrangements to have my car attached to that train, and settled down to a quiet day's work in the car, writing up notes, etc. Mathews and Lindsay meantime drove up town to interview the governor as to assignment of warehouse and residence facilities, etc. They came back with "promises." About 6:00 P.M. our second trailer, a very pleasant little sailor lad from the Russian navy, returned from town where he had spent most of the day, bringing a message that the president of the Ukraine, Rakovsky, would like to have Mathews and me

call on him for a conference at 8:30 P.M. A little later Elbert, who had been away to visit a friend in town, returned to report that the train which he had been told in the morning would leave for the south at eleven-thirty this evening had been "taken off." A Russian Red Cross train had been substituted and we would have to wait until tomorrow night. I told him to ask the station master to attach us to the Red Cross train. The reply came back that the regulations allowed only twenty cars to a train and that as the Red Cross train was exactly twenty cars it would be impossible to attach us. Again a violation of the Riga agreement! I sent Elbert back to the station master with a message that my car must be attached to the first train leaving for the south even if it were a Red Cross train and even if one of the Red Cross cars had to be left behind. Otherwise I must return to Moscow tomorrow. Elbert came back in ten minutes and reported that the office was closed! Some twenty minutes later an official-looking gentleman who said he was the secretary of the Executive Committee of the Ukrainian government appeared on the scene with a message from the president inviting me to spend a few days in town as "guest of the government," saying that they had a nice room for me. He also reported that the president unfortunately had an unexpected conference for this evening and therefore could not receive Mathews and me as he had planned but would like to see us tomorrow morning. I began to see light: it was becoming pretty obvious that the difficulty between the Ukrainian and Russian governments had not been settled and that the Ukrainians had no intention of letting me proceed with my investigations until it had been. So I bowed gracefully to the inevitable, agreed to stay over to see the president tomorrow, but politely declined the invitation to become a guest of the government. I had had previous experiences with "nice rooms" in famine-stricken Russia.

This settled, the secretary left. Fifteen minutes later he and Elbert returned together to report that there had been a "mistake: the president finds that he can see you this evening after all; a motor is awaiting you." So Mathews and I gobbled a little

supper and were whisked away over the snow through a very beautiful, crisp-cold starlit night to the government house. There we were received by President Rakovsky. He proved to be a well-built man of moderate height, clean shaven, with thinning dark hair, brown eyes; about forty years of age, I should guess. He wore a close-fitting dark jacket with a "clerical" collar. Received us cordially. He said he spoke German but instead of using that language, which I could understand readily, he chose to use Russian, which I could follow with much difficulty. I arranged with Elbert to translate "every word," which he readily promised to do; but his promise was much better than his performance, for I could follow enough of the conversation to know that much of it was omitted in translation. For something over an hour Elbert and the president discussed the relations between Russia, the Ukraine, and the American Relief Administration. Then the president asked me many questions as to A.R.A. plans in the Ukraine and my mission in particular; and insisted that no adjustment had been made of the difficulty which I had been assured had been settled. Whether Mathews could properly go on with his plans for opening an office here or I with my tour of investigation must depend on the settlement of this difference. He finally promised to telephone Moscow tonight and to give us a definite answer tomorrow. Conversation then turned to other matters, and the president brought up the question of obtaining seed maize for the Ukraine: said he wished to purchase 2,000,000 puds, and wished to know if it could be obtained in America and if so what would be the best way to go about it. I replied that I thought it could be arranged through A.R.A. and promised to telegraph Haskell about it. Rakovsky was enthusiastic about the possibilities of a much greater development of maize-growing in his country and quoted especially the opinion of Professor Henry of the University of Wisconsin "in Central America." Left about midnight.

December 16.—About 10:00 A.M. a motor came for me and I went again to the president's office, stopping en route to

pick up Mathews who had accepted yesterday's invitation to occupy a government room and had slept there last night. The president told us again at great length that the Ukraine was an independent republic and that it would not be proper for A.R.A. to work here without first entering into some definite agreement such as had been signed between A.R.A. and Russia, referring repeatedly to the "misunderstanding" on the subject between A.R.A. and the Ukraine, in spite of my repeated protests that there was no question between A.R.A. and the Ukraine—that if there were any misunderstanding it was between Russia and the Ukraine, for A.R.A. was operating solely on assurances from Russia and on Russia's request for assistance for the whole country, including the Ukraine. He spoke of the great political importance to the Ukraine of refusing to recognize dependence on Russia and said he must insist on this in spite of the fact that he was most anxious to have A.R.A. work here. Said he had learned this morning at five o'clock that the wires to Moscow have been down for five days and that messages which had been sent to him from there on the subject had not arrived and the situation therefore remained just as it was last week. He will go to Moscow himself tonight and expects to settle the whole business shortly. Meanwhile, as a purely temporary measure, however, he would like to have McPherson and Hynes continue their work of organization at Kiev and Odessa and Mathews at Kharkov, and me to go on with my investigation. Will give all necessary papers and instructions (in fact he dictated them to his stenographer at once). I asked his advice as to what points I should visit, showing him a list which I had prepared. This he approved. In general, he said, the conditions were very bad in the south, especially throughout Zaporozh, most of Odessa, and large parts of Donets, Ekaterinoslav, and Kremenchug. Nikolaiev and Kherson have suffered from crop failure but peasants there still have stocks left from previous harvests. Other parts of the country have crops nearly up to normal and some of them have a surplus, though there are many bad spots in the west as a

result of war or pogroms. He mentioned especially the town of Fastov near Kiev, where some 12,000 Jews had been massacred.

December 17.—The president did not send the promised letters, permits, etc., until today, so that it was impossible to make any arrangements for getting away to the south until this morning. Then we found there would be no train before night. Worked all day in car except for a two-mile walk to town for lunch at a little Bolshevik restaurant profusely decorated with revolutionary cubist posters—the same restaurant where, last week, Golder and I were cautioned by a sympathetic waiter not to sit too near the walls. En route had the somewhat novel experience of seeing camels hauling huge sledges of firewood through the snow at a temperature of something below zero.

Lawlessness in Kharkov reported very serious. Was warned to be very careful going about at night, as there have been several recent cases where people have been held up for their clothing—killed and then stripped naked.

December 18.—Got away from Kharkov about midnight last night and this morning found my car sidetracked at Pavlograd, junction point for Rostov, where the train for Sebastopol to which I was to be attached was to be made up. After long delay got started again and moved on as far as Sinelnikovo, reaching there about midafternoon. Then another long delay, which ended, however, in the course of time, and we moved on farther south. Finally reached my objective point, Alexandrovsk, capital of Zaporozh (the scene of Mazeppa's adventures), about 8:00 P.M. Elbert at once tried to telephone to the governor, but was unable to raise anyone, and as the night was very cold and dark and the town a couple of miles away and there were no conveyances, I decided to wait till morning.

December 19.—Immediately after breakfast Elbert got through to the governor by telephone. Carriage called for me and took me through the scraggly town to the government office. Long interview with the governor and various heads of sections whom he summoned for the purpose. Promised me

full statistical information tomorrow. Stated that all of Zaporozh is in a bad way. Repeated raids by Denikin, and especially by Wrangel, have carried off what little stocks of food and animals had existed. After Denikin and Wrangel there had been further lootings by various bandit bodies, and many pogroms, especially in Alexandrovsk, where the population was one-third Jewish. But little attention had been paid by Moscow to the needs of this part of the country. The governor suggested that I visit some of the villages in the neighborhood and agreed to provide a car and a member of his medical staff to show me about. I agreed, and it was arranged that we should start at one o'clock *sharp*. Lunched with Elbert at a little restaurant near the government office—a fairly good meal for 53,000 rubles for two. The car, which was to have come at twelve-thirty to take me down to my railroad car at the station, so that I might gather up the few articles which I needed for the trip, did not appear until one o'clock. Then, after driving the two miles to the station and getting my things, the doctor who had been slated to accompany me discovered that he must go back to the government house to get some documents which he needed. Just as we were ready to leave the government house after having procured the papers, the chauffeur discovered that he did not have enough gas and oil. He must get an "order" for them. This cost another long delay. Having got the order he must next get the goods, and these were at the government warehouse several miles out of town in the direction opposite to that in which we wished to go. We drove to the warehouse and the man in charge there discovered that the orders were not properly countersigned. The doctor, however, managed to get this difficulty adjusted by telephone, and about three o'clock we finally got started toward the village of Zhervetz. It was a very cold two-hour drive in a car which only at rare intervals managed to run for more than a mile without having to stop for repairs of one sort or another. Thermometer well below zero, but little snow. Arrived after dark. Visited the large state hospital built to accommodate

several hundred but now unable to care for more than the sixty-three patients crowded into two or three rooms. No bed clothes or heating for more. Many of the patients in the last stages of starvation, among them a sprinkling of typhus patients. Forty-five of the patients are children and all forty-five are crowded into one room about twenty by thirty feet, two, three, or four in each bed. Also visited several peasant houses and found them generally neat and well cared for but so far as I could discover absolutely bare of anything edible except in some cases small quantities of various food substitutes. Unspeakable misery everywhere. Spent the night at the hospital headquarters, where we had supper which consisted of a very weak tea substitute, fish-head soup which I found great difficulty in gulping down at all, and a small bit of very coarse and very black bread.

December 20.—Ready to start at eight. Thermometer 15 or 16 below zero. *After* we were well settled in the car, the chauffeur decided he'd better fill the radiator. He found he had nothing to fill it with. He borrowed a small kitchen funnel and a large tin cup, and carried the water cupful by cupful from the kitchen to the car—we meanwhile getting colder and colder. After a time, however, we got under way, and struggled along, with the motor in even worse condition than yesterday, first to the town of Preobrazhenka and then to Omelnik, visiting peasants' homes at both places. Unspeakable conditions of hunger and disease in many families. Much typhus also, the doctor reports. No real food in any of the homes I visited, though in a good many of them there were still supplies of substitutes, such as dried weeds, grass, corn-cobs, oil-seed cake, etc. At the last town I visited, some miles away from the other two, I found the famine committee in session. They were a group of rather intelligent-looking, able-bodied men, but seemed utterly bewildered and unable to develop any kind of a plan for helping themselves. They told me that the state government at Alexandrovsk had food which had been assigned to them here but that they were unable to get it because they

were not yet "organized." They appeared to me to be utterly lacking in initiative. A little later when I remarked to the doctor that the plowing and planting of the fields appeared to be more completely neglected here than in any other part of either Russia or the Ukraine that I had visited, and asked him why it was, he replied that the people were apathetic—which I suppose means the same thing as lacking in initiative. Reached Alexandrovsk on the return at about 3:00 P.M., very cold and hungry. Lunched at the same restaurant as yesterday on soup, bread, pork cutlets, and fried potatoes: 75,000 rubles (at that time about one dollar!) for the three of us. Then called on the governor for a final conference, returned to my railroad car about six, and got away toward Ekaterinoslav about eight.

December 21.—Very slow ride during the night. Early this morning reached Sinelnikovo. Here it was necessary to get switched a few hundred yards from the station of the Alexandrovsk line to that of the Ekaterinoslav line. The process required the entire forenoon and the first two hours of the afternoon, and it was not until 2:00 P.M. that we got started for Ekaterinoslav. After that, very slow progress with innumerable stops especially at a town about ten versts from our destination on the east bank of the Dnieper. Finally at dusk crossed the river on the 1,246-meter bridge and arrived at Ekaterinoslav about 7:30 P.M. Elbert telephoned to the gubispolkom and to the governor's residence, but could raise no one, so I settled down for the night.

December 22.—About nine-thirty this morning Elbert telephoned to the gubispolkom. Reported that he had had an insolent reply but that after he had explained his authority someone at the other end had promised to send a car for me in half an hour. Waited until nearly twelve, but no car. Then decided to go up town anyhow, and with Elbert took a dilapidated tramcar which runs up the several-mile-long main avenue. The city evidently has been a fine one. The avenue, very broad and lined with fine trees, reminds one remotely of the Champs Élysées. On my instructions, Elbert went to the gubispolkom to

present my letter from President Rakovsky, while I strolled along the avenue. I gave Elbert a definite message that the governor must see me at once or not at all. They either want assistance or they do not. If not, I have no business here, and shall move on at once. This message had the desired effect, and shortly Elbert reappeared with the acting-governor (the governor is away at Kharkov), who came out to receive me. Went back with him to his office and we got down to business. He and his co-officials promised full replies to a set of questions I had prepared—would send them to my car this evening. Talked with many of the officials; visited their "food museum," where they have collected a very interesting assortment of the various sorts of food substitutes which are being used by the people; and had a long interview with the very wide-awake representative of the local newspaper, who told me he had lived in Petrograd for many years before the revolution, and claims to have been an intimate friend of the former Ambassador Francis. Judging merely from the condition of the city of Ekaterinoslav, the situation in this state is far from being as serious as that in Zaporozh. Was particularly interested in seeing for the first time the curious Cossack funeral custom—the funeral procession through the main streets headed by two groups of pallbearers, the first (in this case a group of young girls) carrying the empty coffin, and the second bearing the body fully exposed on a high bier. Much lawlessness was reported in the town, especially in the form of petty thefts, and we were warned to keep our belongings in the railway car well guarded.

December 23.—Early this morning left for Elisabetgrad. Many delays. Weather much milder. Little snow on ground. Evidence of much plowing having been done this autumn, and some planting of winter cereals. Country mostly flat and un-forested, though as we get nearer to Elisabetgrad there is some rolling land and here and there some forest. Many delays; and at nightfall we were still en route.

December 24.—A very slow ride this morning through

country similar to yesterday's. Did not reach Elisabetgrad until 2:00 P.M. I then sent Elbert to the gubispolkom to arrange for appointments. He returned after a long delay reporting that he had had great difficulty in finding anybody, as this was Saturday afternoon and Christmas Eve (many Russians are now celebrating not only their old Christmas but the new official one as well); but that he had finally succeeded and the executive and various other officials would be ready for me tomorrow morning at ten o'clock.

December 25.—This morning about ten-thirty the mayor came for me with a droshka and drove me to the gubispolkom, where I met the assembled officials. Long conference on conditions in this uiezd and in other parts of the guberniia. They gave me what is apparently fairly complete information (statistical) for the uiezd. The medical situation here is worse than the food situation. Typhus is increasing rapidly (number of cases has increased from 180 to 280 in three weeks). They are desperately short of medicines and drugs and hospital supplies and equipment. Besides the 280 cases in hospital there are many other cases which cannot be taken into hospital for want of equipment, and these are scattered about the city in various private houses. All three types of typhus are prevalent. Was probably introduced by refugees from the Volga. With the city physician, I visited the chief hospital. Not only was it wretchedly equipped but apparently badly managed, and inexpressibly dirty and foul-smelling. Fifty-three new typhus patients arriving today; a number of them arrived while I was there. To make room for the new, old patients have to be put out, often long before it is safe for them to be removed. I saw one man so weak he was just barely able to stand clinging to some support, clothed in thin rags which only partly covered his body, put out forcibly in spite of his sobbing protests, with no one to receive him or care for his needs, into an outdoor temperature many degrees below freezing. When I inquired, I was told that they knew the man couldn't live outside, but his fever was gone and his place was needed for other worse cases.

Many are dying here daily. In the mortuary I found several score bodies, stripped naked, thrown in helter-skelter, men, women, and children, their limbs and features twisted and distorted just as the death agony had left them. It was not a pleasant Christmas experience. Returned to car in the afternoon. Shortly afterward, an old school friend of Elbert's called. He is a Jew, a reporter on the local paper. Tells a pitiful tale of his experiences since the revolution. Formerly was well to do, but all the property of himself and his family has disappeared, mainly as the result of the numerous pogroms. He said, however, that he did not believe these pogroms to have been religious, but rather economic. The Jews being shopkeepers, etc., with movable goods, were the ones who fell prey most readily to the raiding bands which had been infesting the western Ukraine. He asked me for an interview and was so obviously in need of the few rubles which he might be able to get for it from his paper, that I didn't have the heart to refuse. Left for Odessa during the evening.

December 26.—Moving southwest across Nikolaiev. Black earth region. Some signs that a partial crop at least has been harvested this year. Crossed the river Bug at Vosnesinsk. The long elaborate approaches to the bridge, and the bridge itself showed many evidences of the fighting of last year and last spring — trenches, barbed-wire entanglements, et cetera. In Odessa guberniia little evidence of any harvesting last autumn or preparations for a new crop. Very little plowing has been done. Less and less snow on ground as we advance, and after we crossed the Bug into Odessa guberniia, practically none. Reached Odessa (many signs of fighting in the outskirts) about 4:00 P.M. Through Elbert, made various attempts to discover where Hynes could be found (Hynes has come from Moscow since I left there, to open a district office in Odessa), but was unable to get any information, and finally decided to wait till morning.

December 27.—At nine-thirty, with Elbert, walked to the Foreign Office and there learned that Hynes was probably at the

Hotel des Étrangères which was run by the government as a "guest house." They provided me with an auto and at the hotel I found Hynes. He told me of his many difficulties since his arrival about a week ago. Politeness and promises but not much more from the authorities. It had been made clear to him, as it has to me, that so long as there is no definite arrangement between the Ukrainian government and A.R.A., we are here on sufferance. At 4:00 P.M., with Elbert, called on the acting-governor. Found Useny (of the Russian Foreign Office) also there. I found myself subjected to a long cross-examination as to the objects of my visit, my plans, etc. They emphasized again the fact that A.R.A. has no agreement with the Ukraine, but in the end agreed to let me have information I asked for, provided I would put my request in writing. I explained that it would save much time and be much more satisfactory if I could get personally in touch with the proper officials—heads of statistical and agricultural offices, etc., as had been my usual procedure, but they politely declined to let me do this. They promised, however, that if I would give them a list of questions tonight the replies would be ready for me by 4:00 P.M. tomorrow. On the whole, their attitude combined with the "cautiousness" with which I had been received in other parts of the Ukraine—being treated as though A.R.A. had come into the Ukraine asking favors—greatly tempted me to chuck the job of trying to help them. If it had not been for the conviction that there were much larger issues involved, I think I should have done so. Dined with Hynes at the hotel (meal hours in this part of the world are the most unusual I have found anywhere—breakfast about ten; lunch anywhere from four to five; dinner, from nine-thirty to ten-thirty), and then returned to my car; have declined the government's invitation to move to their guest house.

December 28.—Yesterday, I had made arrangements with the authorities, through Hynes, for a trip today out to some of the neighboring villages where conditions were said to be especially bad. Nothing happened, however, except that we were

presented with various polite reasons why the trip should be postponed. The replies to the written questions, which I gave to the acting-governor last evening, also failed to show up as promised—will be ready “tomorrow.” Today I decided to move to the guest house so as to be in closer touch with Hynes, and did so during the day. A fairly comfortable place though I should have preferred my car. I visited the government antique sale shop—a large stock of rugs, embroideries, furniture, objets d’art, etc., evidently collected from the homes of the old bourgeoisie by the government for export. They refused to give me permission to purchase one or two little things which I wanted. Arranged with Hynes and the dock authorities to visit the docks tomorrow.

December 29.—More delays. No trip to the villages; no visit to the docks; no answers to my questions. Instead, an invitation to occupy a box at the opera this evening. Hynes, although he has been here a week, has had no communications from Moscow, and the food cars with which he was to start operations here have not arrived. His own wires to Moscow apparently have failed to get through. He has been, therefore, most anxious to send a courier off to Moscow, but until today has been unsuccessful. Today he finally succeeded; has got the necessary papers and a reliable man who is to leave this evening. To the opera in the evening: *La Bohème* given passably well. In front of the opera house the statue of one of the former tsars has been replaced by a huge and crude bust of Karl Marx. During the evening the lights were extinguished for a long time. This I am told happens every evening, as there is a shortage of fuel, in spite of the fact that steamers are arriving at fairly frequent intervals with coal from Germany and England.

December 30.—With Hynes, Elbert, and the dock commandant, drove through the docks. Evident intention that we should have only a superficial view. Apparently in good condition, though very little in use and suffering somewhat from neglect. On the whole, however, apparently well able to handle

any supplies which A.R.A. may decide to send in this way. In pre-war days, handled some ten million tons per annum; now, the dock commandant stated, about ten thousand tons a month, mostly small Black Sea vessels. Coal and food coming in, and leather and minerals (manganese) going out. We saw one English steamer and one very small American (flying both the American and the Italian flags). Learned through one of Hynes' men that the J.D.C. in connection with a Russian-Jewish organization is already operating here, having developed a food packet distribution plan on a small scale. Trip to the outside villages again postponed; promised again for "tomorrow." Still no reply to my questions—not ready yet. Standing at my window at the hotel this morning, witnessed the following. The basement of the hotel is used as a storeroom by a detachment of Red soldiers. In their stores are many sacks of potatoes. A squad of soldiers arrived at the hotel with a motor lorry to take a load of these potatoes to some other station. They carried them across the sidewalk from the basement window and loaded them on the lorry. Some of the sacks were broken, and occasionally a potato leaked out and rolled into the gutter. In time there was quite an accumulation in the gutter. A ragged old woman hovered about and, watching an opportunity, tried to retrieve some of them. The soldiers ordered her off. She tried again and again but each time was caught and dragged off. She finally got one or two in her hands, but a soldier saw her, grabbed the potatoes from her, threw them back into the gutter, and gave her a violent shove, which sent her reeling across the street till she fell in a heap in the middle twenty feet away. She then limped away. A moment later the loading of the lorry was completed; the squad climbed aboard; the chauffeur pulled the car a little forward, and then backed in such a way (whether intentionally or not, I could not say) that the foot-broad tires passed squarely over the pile of potatoes in the gutter and crushed them into a shapeless mess in the mud.

December 31.—At last the trip out to the villages. A car

called for me at eight-thirty this morning with a representative of the Foreign Office. Hynes and I asked the hotel people to put us up a little lunch. They asked what we wanted, and we said some bread and hard-boiled eggs. They gave us two dozen boiled eggs! Elbert, for some reason, failed to turn up, so we took Hynes' interpreter, Coblentz, along. We began the day badly, for our chauffeur soon after we left town, seeing a dog foraging for scraps of food in the road, deliberately and before we could guess what he was up to, ran out of his way to run over the poor beast. We visited two villages, the capitals of their volosts. In each place found the village committee waiting for us with statements and statistics on the present food situation. Their tales were pretty depressing; but in the peasant houses which we visited, I found that, although there were many evidences of distress, the condition of the people was considerably better than in most of the famine districts I have visited. In each of the villages, at the village headquarters where the committee was in session to receive us, we found groups of ten or twelve onlookers gathered about who appeared to be in very serious condition; but aside from these small groups the people we saw looked on the whole fairly well. Evidences of famine were nevertheless abundant as we drove along the roads. The fields showed evidences of long neglect. Apparently there has been no recent plowing or sowing, probably not for two years. Along the roads were many carcasses of horses or cows, prey to carrion crows and wolfish-looking dogs. Returned to Odessa about four-thirty. Decided to wait no longer for the promised replies to my questions; left cards at the gubispolkom and the Foreign Office, and went to the train, which was scheduled to leave at eight-twenty. Elbert turned up at the last moment bringing with him the long-delayed answers to my questions. The train finally pulled out at about eleven, nearly three hours late.

January 1, 1922.—When I got up this morning we were still in the guberniia of Odessa, the northern part. Very prosperous looking. Much plowing and planting has been done.

Everything seems neater. Very little snow on ground. About dark reached Zhmerinka.

January 2.—Some time during the night we reached Vinitsa, capital of Podolia. As we approached, I looked out and was surprised to find a brilliantly lighted station—electric lights—the first well-lighted station I have seen anywhere in Russia or the Ukraine. After breakfast, Elbert got into communication with the gubispolkom, and about eleven a car came to take us to call on the governor, Poraiko. Well received by him. Apparently an able and intelligent man. He and his co-officials are the best I have seen anywhere in Russia except possibly the men in the statistical bureau in Kharkov. The governor assigned a man to accompany me to the State Statistical Bureau where I was given at once all the information I asked for. In general the situation here seems to be satisfactory. There is no pressing need for assistance, though the governor told me that they have barely enough food for themselves after paying the 16,000,000 pud tax to the Kharkov government (11,000,000 of this has already been paid). A good many refugees from the Volga and the south have to be cared for. Went also to the Health Office. Saw the director, who after a short interview put me in charge of a Miss London, a Russian girl in charge of child relief in the district. There are some two thousand children in the guberniia in her care, mostly refugees. With her visited the hospital, 250 beds, of which 120 at present are occupied. Eighty of the 120 patients are children. Most of the cases are recurrent typhus. Everything apparently well cared for and efficiently managed. Then to a children's home and a maternity hospital. All three of these institutions were in excellent condition—the best I have seen in Russia. There is serious shortage of equipment and medicines, and I got a list of requirements promising to see if it were possible to get them some supplies from the A.R.A. medical department. Lunched at the maternity home as guest of the director. Returned to my car. No outward evidences of serious need in the town. Attached car to a freight train and reached Kasatin late in the evening.

January 3.—Waited all day in the station at Kasatin expecting a train at any moment to carry us along on the next stage of the journey.

January 4.—Repetition of yesterday. No train yet.

January 5.—Early this morning a train came along and we were moved a few miles to Berdichev. Another long delay here, but finally another train hauled us on the few remaining miles to our destination, Zhitomir, capital of Volhynia, which we reached about 2:00 P.M. We had traveled about a hundred miles in sixty-seven hours!

January 6.—Yesterday afternoon, after arrival at Zhitomir, telephoned the gubispolkom of my arrival, and Governor Nikolaenko sent car to bring me to town, some three versts distant. Very pleasantly received by governor and his assistants, who offered every facility for getting information. Made arrangements for various visits to hospitals, etc., today. Spent large part of today in making these visits and getting statistical and other data on situation. Harvest here was good and there is no lack of food. Town looks fairly prosperous. A considerable number of refugees from the Volga and southern Ukraine being cared for, especially children. During the day, received a cordial invitation from the governor for Elbert and myself to attend the theater this evening as his guests. He explained that he himself was unfortunately unable to go with us, as he had an important meeting on hand, but that his auto would call for us at our car about seven o'clock. At seven we were ready and the auto came promptly. We drove the three miles—very cold—to the theater only to find it in complete darkness. With considerable difficulty found someone who could give information, and discovered that the governor had made a mistake: the performance is to be by a visiting company, which is not due to arrive until tomorrow and the first appearance is to be tomorrow night! Returned to the car and utilized the evening in writing up notes by a very dim oil light, which is the best our car affords.

January 7.—Got away about noon toward Kiev. Just as

we were leaving a young Russian woman with a baby in arms came to the car and begged piteously to be allowed to ride with us to Kiev, where she is to join her husband. She had her ticket, but the train is a freight train and although she had begged all the railroad men to let her get on somewhere, they had refused. It was entirely uncertain when there would be a passenger train, and tomorrow is Christmas (Russian Christmas), and she must get to her husband. We had an extra compartment on the car and let her occupy that. Nothing especially noteworthy along the route. Country heavily covered with snow.

January 8.—Russian Christmas. Arrived early at Kiev. Since I was here with Golder, McPherson has arrived and set up a district office pending a settlement of the misunderstanding between Russia and the Ukraine concerning the status of A.R.A. here. I set out to try to locate him, but as all the government offices were closed, I found it a rather hopeless task until, after two hours of wandering about, we found a man who thought there was an American living at such and such a place. This lead proved to be correct. I found McPherson and had a long conference with him as to conditions and the progress of his work. During the day, also strolled about the beautiful city—it was a clear, cold, snow-buried day—and was much interested in watching the Christmas celebrations of the people. The churches were crowded. Most of the people who were not in the churches apparently were promenading on the principal streets with such good clothes as they still possessed. On the hilly streets, of which there are many, men, boys, and Red soldiers were having a great time skiing or sledding.

January 9.—Moved to McPherson's. Called on Governor Gamrniki, but found him very indifferent. Rather reluctantly he promised, however, to see that I got the information I desired. Called at the Health Department and was well received. With one or two of the doctors visited the children's hospital and the adult receiving-station. Conditions very bad, especially in the children's hospital. Overcrowding, poor equipment, and bad management. One room in the hospital I shall never

forget: a room about fifty by twenty, with fifty or sixty children jammed into it, two, three, or four in a bed, and all seriously ill with dysentery. A happy contrast was another room containing about fifty young boys, all refugees from the German colonies on the Volga. They appeared to be in fairly good condition, though they were confined to that one room because there was hardly enough clothing among the whole fifty of them together to clothe half a dozen of them sufficiently for the zero weather out of doors or in the corridors of the hospital itself. Yet on the whole, they seemed quite happy and were immensely pleased when they found I could talk German with them. Dined in the evening at a much-hidden-away restaurant which the Red commandant had shown to McPherson—a place rather luxuriously equipped with what I suppose was loot and serving a very fair meal. It was much better than the little Georgian restaurant which Golder and I found on our earlier visit.

January 10.—Busy all day rounding up odds and ends of information on the situation, writing up notes, and preparing for departure tomorrow.

January 11 to January 14.—En route to Moscow. Many delays but no adventures. Arrived Moscow Saturday, the 14th, about twenty-four hours late. Went to the Pink House and had a BATH.



Top: *An American on a tour of inspection of A.R.A. kitchens*
 Center: *Distributing American corn*
 Bottom: *"The Amerikanets" has arrived*

VI

PETROGRAD

(JANUARY 1-21, 1922)

January 1, 1922.—I was rather excited when I arrived here yesterday for I was eager to see what the last five years had done for this city. This morning, I set out in search of my former friends and passed one dead street after another, until I came to the Nevski, which showed some signs of life. Each front door at which I knocked gives back a hollow sound—nobody there, for the occupants of the house have moved into the back kitchen. In one of these two-by-fours I found what was left of the family with whom I used to live while I worked here in the Archives. The strain of the war and the revolution has been too much for it in more ways than one. The father has gone off by himself, and the daughter by herself, leaving the mother and two boys. They live, as I said, in the back kitchen, a tiny room, one side of which is fixed up with bunks, one over the other, and the other side for a kitchen, dining-room, and laundry. The mother is employed in a bureau, the older boy in the Red Army, and the younger works where he can; but the efforts of the three together are clearly not enough to feed and clothe them, for they look gaunt and ragged.

Leaving them I went in search of the family of Professor Lappo-Danilevski, the noted historian who lectured at the University of Cambridge in 1916, and who was asked to give the Lowell Institute lectures in 1917, but who, before the invitation reached him, died of hunger. One of his sons, a young and talented artist, has died of typhus, and the other son and his broken-hearted mother live in a cold, dark garret room.

Last night the American Relief Administration representatives were invited to be present at the New Year festivities at the opera house. It has been a long time since I was in that building and I was naturally curious to see the changes. At the

door stood slovenly cigarette-smoking men in the uniforms of the old Imperial Guard; I suppose the reason for preserving this relic of tsarism is the lack of other clothing. The inside of the opera house has not changed, but I now saw it from a different angle. Formerly, I used to look into the box where royalty sat, and now I looked out of it. We (that is to say, two American Relief Administration men and a government representative) were at first put in the box of the Grand Dukes (now Zinoviev's), but a little later were transferred to the loge of the Tsar himself, now occupied by tovarischi. The opera house was full of members of the Soviet and their families, so it was all Red. When the curtain went up there appeared before us on the stage a long table (the side to the public being unoccupied), in the center of which sat Zinoviev facing the audience, while around him were dignitaries of one kind and another. It is sacrilege to say it, but the scene brought to mind da Vinci's picture of the Last Supper. The program opened with the playing of the "International," during which we all stood up. When that was over Zinoviev made his report on the Ninth Session of All Russian Soviets, just ended in Moscow. His voice was squeaky and unpleasant, just at first; but as he went on he became quite eloquent and I listened to him with much interest. He began by a eulogy of Korolenko, the great Russian writer, who died a few days ago, and announced that a street and a university would be named after him. When he had buried him and had placed a wreath on his tomb he proceeded with the report of the Ninth Session. He said that when the world learned of the Russian famine some of the capitalistic states thought that it was the opportunity they longed for to crush the Soviet; others proposed to send in committees to investigate and to spy; still others saw in it a chance to develop commerce, and offered help. The Soviet accepted the last proposition, for it regarded it as a great moral victory that the capitalists made such an offer. More recently the American government through Hoover came forward with a proposition that if the Soviet should spend ten million dollars in America purchasing food

for relieving the famine, the American government would spend twice as much again for the same purpose. This offer was made while the Soviet was in session and was accepted.¹

He then went on to say that 1921 would be memorable in history because in that year in capitalistic countries grain was being burned as fuel, while millions of the Russian proletariat were dying of hunger. It was the crumbs that the bourgeoisie were giving to the proletariat.

"It is hardly worth while," he continued, "to discuss whether the capitalistic powers will or will not recognize the government of the soldiers, peasants, and workingmen. As a matter of fact they have already recognized us by their acts, by their trade relations. Diplomatic papers do not matter. After all we are here, and we have been in office for five years, longer than any other European government.

"At the meeting of the Soviet in Moscow little was said about World Revolution. Facts, however, speak louder than words. While we were in session we heard that revolution had broken out in India, in Egypt, and in other places. History works for us.

"We learned at the session that the Japanese had seized Khabarov. By a strange coincidence there was present a Japanese delegate, an old worker in the cause of the proletariat, and he said that such a deed made him ashamed of being Japanese. From this you see, tovarischi, that the best people the world over are on our side and our side is the best side.

"The bourgeoisie when they attack us say that they do so because we are not democratic and so on. Why did Japan attack the Far Eastern Republic? It is democratic according to the understanding of the capitalists, and yet they do not leave it alone. What hypocrites these capitalistic governments are!"

¹As a matter of fact there had been no "proposition" from the American government. Hoover had, however, in view of the efforts in behalf of the Russian relief in America, very strongly pressed the Soviet to make purchases of food and seed either in Europe or America in order to give convincing proof that the Soviet was actually using its own resources in the crisis.

After his address came music and dancing. As I sat there I recalled an evening in March 1914 when I was in this opera house for the first time to see the ballet Konek Gorbunok, so rich in oriental costumes and decorations and so full of soft enchanting music. On that memorable evening the mighty Grand Dukes occupied the boxes right off the stage; to the right, to the left, and all about them sat high-born diplomats representing the most sacred rulers, haughty ministers of state, proud of their numerous decorations, distinguished generals in resplendent uniforms, beautiful princesses in gorgeous gowns and glittering jewels. The whole scene was a picture from the magic land of the Arabian Nights. All that is left of that gay day are the scenic decorations and actors' costumes, and they contrast painfully with the shabby clothes of these lowly workmen.

January 2.—Last night I went again to the ballet and saw quite a different audience. On New Year's Eve certain classes of workingmen were allowed to come in free, but on New Year's Night a high admission fee was charged and Ivan could not afford to attend. The many profiteers who were present were well dressed, some in evening clothes, and many of them wore the diamonds and pearls of the old aristocracy and bourgeoisie. This new rich class is as yet less cultured, less gentlemanly than the old, but it is more unscrupulous and more grasping.

At the Dom Iskustvo, formerly a palace of a merchant prince, I met today a number of artists and scholars. It is astonishing how little they know of what has been going on outside of Russia. They had heard of the Treaty of Versailles but had not read it, and I doubt if they can name a dozen books that have been published in Western Europe since 1918. To these people I seem like a man from Mars, and they stop long enough from the never-ending drudgery of bread-hunting to ask for information which has lost all news value to us. But I question whether anything that I tell them seems as strange to them as their experiences of the last three years sound to me.

They almost cry out in pain when they recount the happenings of the years 1919 and 1920. These years are divided according to the principal articles of food at the time—millet, frozen potatoes, and salt herring. Western Europe has little conception what the Russians (Communists and non-Communists alike) have endured. We thought that it was a fine thing for Soviet to announce that "he who will not work shall not eat"; but the trouble was that for the most part the Soviet could furnish neither the work nor the "eats" and would not let anyone else do that. Millions of men and women were left without any means of support, for everything had been taken from them, even their jobs. Streets became deserted because public cabs were prohibited, and cars were not running because there was no power. Houses were cold because there was no fuel, and the whole family huddled in the kitchen where a small stove was kept burning with books, pieces of furniture, or the wood from the floors in the other rooms. Those who had no books or furniture or other rooms either tore down houses or froze.

The question of food was more important than that of fuel. Usually when darkness set in some member of the family sneaked out in search of a Red soldier or Red speculator, with whom to exchange a bit of jewelry for a few pieces of bread. While he was gone the family waited anxiously for his return, for the chances were about even that either in going or coming, the Red police would nab him and not only take everything from him but also put him in prison to starve. But as this barter was not sufficient to take care of all the hungry, for the amount of food in the city was insufficient for that purpose, thousands of fathers and mothers wandered out into the country to exchange whatever had not been taken from them for something to eat.

These poor "sackers" vagabonded sometimes hundreds of miles over highways, but mostly over byways and over ice and swamp to secure a sack of flour, and when they had it, crept back like thieves in the night, sometimes riding inside, sometimes

outside, and often on the top of a box car and just as often under it, but always jumping off before a station was reached and making a detour so as not to fall into the hands of the police. Many of these fathers and mothers froze in the cars or died from typhus by the wayside, and others on their return home found their children beyond the need of food. Men and women who had no jewels to barter or were too old or too feeble to go into the country, died like rats in a trap.

To the pangs of hunger was added the mental anguish of dreaded arrests. The streets were full of wild rumors of coming massacres of the bourgeoisie, of exile to Siberia, of nationalization of women, etc. For weeks at a time, families went to bed with their clothes on and lay there trembling at every shot heard in the street, at every step on the stairs. Every now and then the police pounced down and turned things upside down in the hope of finding valuables and incriminating papers. A letter from abroad, a bit of foreign newspaper was enough evidence for putting the offender against the wall to be shot. Yet all these terrors have not been able to drag from their hiding-places the jewels and other valuables, and today there is a free trade in all these things. The lover of art sometimes wishes that the bourgeoisie had not hidden their art objects quite so well, for rare miniatures, pictures, and other works of art have been ruined forever by being kept in damp places.

Conditions are better now because there is freedom of trade. There is, however, another side to this freedom. During 1918, 1919, and 1920 all those who worked for the State (and nearly everyone did) had house and light free, and occasionally a bread ration. Now the same people, on the theory that they are receiving salaries, are obliged to pay house rent, etc.

The deprivations of these years are beginning to tell on the physical and mental health of the inhabitants. The younger people are suffering from tuberculosis, and the older from heart trouble and nervous diseases. I have been told that in former days the judges and military officers who had to condemn people to death, or Siberia, sooner or later broke down under

the strain. The same is taking place now among the Bolsheviki, especially among the women.

January 13.—Had two visitors tonight and they agreed that the revolution began when Miliukov and others made their famous speeches in the Duma¹ and when Rasputin was killed;² that the army was demoralized before the revolution and Order No. 1; that England encouraged the liberals in their warlike and, at times, antidynastic aims; that the coalition government was a mistake; that in 1917 the Cadets (Constitutional-Democrats) should have left the ministry when Miliukov quit;³ that Rasputin had a great deal of ability, and that like a common peasant he felt that the soldier did not want any more war; and that the land question was behind the revolution. They said that Gorki regarded himself as the successor of Tolstoi, as the embodiment of Russian art and culture; that he helped to a certain extent the intelligentsia, but was always coarse and domineering and turned people against him; that he played a double rôle, siding at times with the Bolos and at other times with their enemies. The intelligentsia did not feel any gratitude toward him. Gorki, my visitors said, made a funny, or rather a pathetic figure, as he tried to wear Tolstoi's boots.

January 15.—Last evening I went to call on a well-known scientist, who thinks he has made great discoveries, great war weapons for destruction. But he is greatly in doubt whether as a man and a lover of his kind, he ought to make his discoveries known. He says so long as scientists have so little to say in matters of government, it behooves them to keep their secrets to themselves and not to hand them over to irresponsible persons. He would have the government in the hands of learned men who would use science for the uplifting and not for the destruction of mankind. I told him that I was against cliques, even scientific ones; we have now in Russia God's chosen people, and they have made a mess of it.

This morning I left the house early and went to service

¹ November 1916.

² December 1916.

³ May 1917.

in St. Isaac's Cathedral. When I was there in 1917 it had thousands of worshippers; today it has a mere handful. The same two classes are present now as then—the common people and the noble; but they have changed places. The nobility keeps in the background to hide its old clothes and torn shoes. Since the revolution women have entered the church choir in larger numbers than before, but their voices are not very suitable for the Russian church music. The whole service lacked the fervor and beauty of former days. Thinking that perhaps in other churches conditions are different, I walked over to the Kazan Cathedral, but it affected me in the same way and I did not remain long.

Today I called on a cultured woman whose family played a prominent part in Russian social and military life a few years back. This poor woman lives in a dark, cold room, quite unheated this year, which in great part accounts for her cough. While we were talking, a letter was handed to her. It was from a former *dame de la cour* who had robbed of her jewels the woman on whom I called. In this letter the robber asked for pardon and forgiveness on the ground that she had a lover, twenty years younger than herself, who had a young mistress, and the old mistress had to steal to give her lover money to support his young mistress. Not bad! After reading the letter my hostess stood for a moment debating the question: "Shall I forgive her? Yes, I will forgive her; because she has confessed and because I know, when I was married, my husband was in love with another woman and I had to give him money to buy her a present. Yes, I will forgive her. Anyway, if I have her arrested, the police will arrest me too and search my room and take from me what little I have left. Yes, I will forgive her." Saying this she crossed herself and thanked God that she had one worry less.

I took this once rich, now poor woman to a restaurant where she usually eats. Our lunch of soup, meat, two vegetables, black bread, and tea cost the equivalent of twenty-five cents. In the market one pays from twenty-five to fifty cents a pound for

meat, seventy-five cents for sugar, and an equally high price for other foodstuffs. How can the restaurant serve a meal for such low cost? I asked this question and the only answer I got was that the restaurants purchase food stolen from State warehouses. I have been in Russia long enough not to believe or deny everything I hear.

After luncheon, I called on a well-known literary critic who had nothing more cheerful to say than, "Let the end come when it will, I have nothing to hope for. Some day Russia may be paradise; today it is hell."

From him I went to the Hotel Astoria to pay my respects to a Communist woman, an old Party Worker. She talked interestingly and explained the history of the Bolshevik party, the difference in point of view that brought on the break in 1903. In 1905 the two factions got together for a time, but in 1908 they once more broke apart. This time it was over the question whether the Socialists should co-operate with the bourgeoisie. Lenin took the stand that if the Socialists were strong enough to support the bourgeoisie, they were strong enough to stand by themselves and not help build up their opponents. In 1917 when the revolution broke out the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks became divided even more than before on the question of theory. The Mensheviks held that the March revolution was a bourgeois revolution, that Russia was not sufficiently developed industrially to be run as a Socialist State, and that the thing to do was to leave the capitalists at the head with the Socialists in control behind the throne. The Bolsheviks took the ground that the revolution is something more than a Russian affair, that it is a breach in the world's capitalistic wall, and that this opening must be widened until the whole world can pass through.

Lenin and the Central Committee were opposed to the July uprising, but the Petrograd Committee and many of the soldiers and workmen favored it and went out against the orders of Lenin, and made a mess of it. The Central Committee opposed an immature uprising because it had learned from the

experience of the French Commune of 1870 and from the Russian events of 1905 that it was not enough for one city alone to come out. Lenin insisted that Russia as a whole must be organized for revolution and then all together give one strong push and throw over the old system. It was easy to get the soldiers and peasants on the side of the Bolos, for they had but one thought, to stop fighting, to go home and get land. Kerenski satisfied neither the soldier nor the peasant and they therefore came over to the side of Lenin, who promised peace and land. This is all there was to it. The bourgeois class in Russia was easy to overthrow because it was not highly developed. America is the most difficult place for the Communists to get a foothold in, because of our labor bourgeoisie, which is misled by big wages and full dinner-pails.

The Communist revolution has not carried out its program, and the world revolution is put off until the time is ripe. Russia was not ready in July, but it was in October.

January 16.—I called on an old, old lady and her two old-maid nieces. The old lady was crippled and sat in her chair dressed in the few bits of finery left and soon to be sold for food. She told me of the Court and recalled that she once danced with our minister Cassius Clay. As Clay was here in the Civil War, one can form an idea of the age of the old lady. The one event in her life which she recalled with most pleasure was her presentation to the Emperor, who, in the course of the afternoon, talked to her twice, and when he asked about her family she replied, "My ancestors have served your ancestors." This pleased him so much that he sent a telegram the following day thanking her for her loyalty to the throne, and this telegram she has kept and is going to have buried with her. "*Il etait si gentil, mon empereur.*" While she was relating her great happiness, other *dames de la cour* entered and talked of old days and occasionally of the new. One good woman was proud that she has never worked for the Bolsheviks, the one consolation left to her; her wish and prayer are that she may die before being obliged to stoop so low. As I sat there among these ladies

of the old régime, one scene after another of the French Revolution and Restoration came to me and I understood history and felt it as never before. The room was icy cold and dark; most of the ladies were hungry, and some of them were selling their last bits of the old régime, but they forgot all that and were living through happy moments, taking the oath of loyalty and vowing never to compromise, never to have anything to do with the "*canaille*." The dear ladies were greatly puzzled and troubled over one thing. In the French Revolution, they said, the nobility stood by the king to the last, while in Russia the nobility gave up without making a great struggle to save the Tsar. I wonder if the French nobles as a whole stood by their rulers any better than the Russian nobility? Of course we talked French; any other language would have been quite improper.

In speaking of the "empereur," it may be worth recording that I read recently a copy of his war diary. It is of great interest because it is so commonplace. At a time when the world was in turmoil, he merely noted in his journal the state of the weather, the exact hour and minute when this one or that one came to see him, and usually wound up the day's work with a phrase like this: "and in the evening I pasted more cards in the album"; or this, "after Grigory [Rasputin] left, I played dominoes." "*Il était si gentil, mon empereur*"—but I would not deprive my dear ladies of their dreams. Poor old souls, how my heart ached for them. They told me of their hardships and disappointments. How they had looked for deliverance from Kolchak, Denikin, Iudenich, Wrangel; and how one by one their hopes, like their jewels, vanished. Finally they came to the conclusion that Russia could be saved only by an uprising. Great was their joy when they heard the guns of Kronstadt boom. They crawled out of their dark corners into the street; when they passed one of their own kind they beamed smiles of understanding; and when they met in private, they embraced. But alas! nothing came of that. "*La Russie est morte; il ne reste que mourir avec le telegram de l'empereur aux mains.*"

January 19.—I went to the theater to see a Russian version of *Les Precieuses ridicules* and *Le Medicin malgre lui*. The scenic decorations by Benois and his son are a credit to them and give atmosphere to the play. After seeing Molière in French and Russian, I have almost come to the conclusion that he is probably played in the same way everywhere. The acting was very good and a credit to the Russian stage. I raised the question with the actors whom I had the pleasure to meet how they like playing to a proletarian audience such as they had tonight? They replied that, taking it all in all, the proletariat are no worse than the bourgeoisie before the war who came not for the sake of the play, but for the purpose of showing off. At times they much prefer to play to simple workmen, because they express their pleasure so wholeheartedly.

It should be said to the credit of the Soviet that it has given the workman an idea of art that he did not have before. When the revolution broke out, the operas, ballets, and plays were thrown open to the proletariat, who greatly enjoyed them. Indeed, they enjoyed them so much that the Communists became troubled. These operas, ballets, and plays portrayed royalty, bourgeois ideology; and there was danger that the new audience would imbibe too freely of the old spirit.

Requests were made to the Red literati to write Red operas and plays, compose Red music, and paint Red decorations. Lunacharsky and some of his associates made a try, but their efforts did not appeal to the people on the street. The soldier and the peasant girl are rather fond of military pomp, church weddings, and displays of finery. The question whether or not to close these bourgeois centers has been discussed by the Communists; for the time being, they are allowed to run, but mainly on their own resources, for State subsidies are gradually being withdrawn. How long they can keep open under these conditions is hard to tell. One thing, however, is certain: the poor workman can no longer afford to attend and is *ipso facto* removed from their pernicious influences. Circumstances force the workman to return to his former humble position.

January 20.—Visited Dom Uchenikh, the center for the scholars of Petrograd. It was filled with men, women, children, and servants waiting in line for their turn to receive the *akademicheski paiok*, the food which the State hands out to scholars. Occasionally it gives out clothing, most of which comes from foreign contributions. Recently the Czecho-Slovaks sent shoes and other things which are being distributed. In this building, a former palace, there is a reading-room, and a tea room where a glass of tea and a bite of bread may be had for a reasonable sum. The scholars are afraid that their paiok may soon come to an end, and should this happen they do not know where to turn.

January 21.—While at the opera tonight I saw a classic example of parvenuism. In a prominent box sat a speculator with his richly dressed wife. They placed in front of them a box of delicious sweets, and in the presence of the onlookers peeled an orange (oranges are as rare in Petrograd as in the Arctic), put it on the sweets, and walked out.

VII

THE CAUCASUS

(FEBRUARY 1—MARCH 13, 1922)

Moscow, February 1, 1922.—During the last three weeks we have been getting cablegrams from America to hasten to the Caucasus to investigate conditions, and for the last three weeks we have been trying to get away but have not been able to secure transportation. Yesterday, however, we had positive assurance that today Car 85 would be attached to the Rostov train. When we came to the Kazan station, no one seemed to know about the car. We went in search of it and found it on a siding, locked, and smashed. Last night, in switching, it was forced to run on two switches at once, with the usual result. We returned to the office and made a fuss, and were again assured that a car would be given us. About five o'clock a telephone call announced that Car 1021, at Briansk station, had been assigned to us. I hurried to the station, and after a long search found that said car had been used until recently for transporting typhus patients, and that it had not been fumigated, cleaned, or aired since.

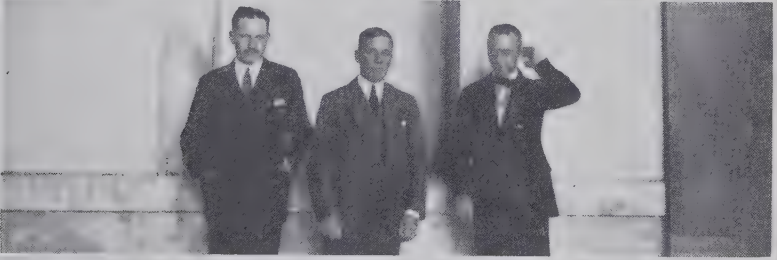
February 2.—At the office this morning nothing was known whether we should or should not get away today. I went to the Kazan station to make inquiry, but none of the officials in charge could give me any information. On returning to headquarters, I learned that Car 2522 had been assigned to us. I was skeptical and returned once more to the station; there, sure enough, after some looking about, I found a large *wagon-lit* being cleaned and prepared for our use. I hurried back and reported that the car would do. By this time, however, other obstacles had arisen.

The travel orders, which each of us has to have and which are first signed by the American Relief Administration executive officer and then sent down to the Soviet representative, had been

tinkered with after they had left the American Relief Administration rooms. The Soviet representative, having burned his fingers in the Ukraine, was afraid to give us a mandate to go to Georgia and Armenia, and had therefore crossed out these names without telling us. In the end all the names were put back and one of our men was sent to the Georgian and Armenian representatives to get visas. While he was engaged in this work we piled our baggage and provisions in two trucks and started for the station, arriving there a little after two, about twenty minutes before train time. The Rostov train was made up, but without our car. I appealed to the "technical engineer," who by this time had been presented with three packages of "Lucky Strike," and he went in search of the man in charge of making up the trains. In the meantime I hurried back and with the aid of one or two of our own employees who were there to help, four station porters, and a big sled, we got our baggage to the car (which was by this time hooked on) just as the second bell rang out. We threw on our stuff, crawled in after it, paid the porters two or three times what they usually receive (but left them still complaining), crossed ourselves in the Orthodox and Catholic fashion, and got away. We should not complain, for one of our porters says that he had only twenty minutes' notice. We did not need such a big car, and considering the poor condition of the engines, it is far too heavy; but we are in no way responsible. For some reason, which is not clear to us, there is no representative of the government with us to look after us and watch us. Why this is so I cannot tell, unless the Cheka has decided that we are not counter-revolutionists and no longer need watching. A blizzard is raging outside and the country we are passing through is cold and bleak. We have taken in a few of the poor passengers who are traveling in the box cars and on the bumpers, and we should like to take in more but do not dare for fear of the typhus.

February 3.—In the course of last night the train stopped a number of times and had much difficulty in getting started again. When I woke early in the morning we were standing

still and I was in doubt whether the whole train was sidetracked or just our car. On investigation I learned that the train was snowbound. After breakfast, Hutchinson went to work making a table for our dining-room, while I busied myself with the fuel question, for the car was cold. Our porters told us yesterday that they would secure fuel at Riazan; but this morning they report that they could not get it. I am almost sure that they are not telling the truth and that they never got off the car to look for it; for as I lay in bed I heard the controller come on board to see our papers, and when the porters inquired about fuel he told them that there was plenty of wood but it had to be cut. This morning they went to the proper authority for fuel and he gave one pud of peat and they bribed the carrier to make it three. But this peat was wet and of poor quality and gave little heat. So far in our travels the liaison officer has looked after the fuel. His method of looking after it is usually as follows: He goes to the station agent, demands fuel, and threatens everybody with arrest if he does not get it. As a usual thing he does not get it. In some cases the agent is placed under arrest just as our train starts and we never know what actually happens after that. We, of course, have no authority to arrest anyone, and if we had it I question its wisdom. It seemed to us that we might try another system. We asked one porter to heat some hot water, and sent the other to invite the station master to have a cup of coffee with us. He came and we treated him to coffee, cigarettes, aspirin, and a little sugar. He noticed at once that our car was cold, and offered to provide us with wood, coal, and (at the request of our porters) water. Like others of his class he complained bitterly against the hardships he and his fellows suffer. He is daily besieged by railway employees and the public for help, but is quite helpless. Refugees are still flocking from the southern guberniias in search of food, and at his station from ten to thirty dead are daily taken off the trains, some of them frozen to death, others dead from typhus, and still others from hunger. He left us about twelve o'clock, with the assurance that our



Top: Scene in Samara when the A.R.A. men departed
 Center: Col. William N. Haskell, Cyril Quinn, and John Mangan
 Bottom: Governor Goodrich, Bill Shafroth, and friends at Samara

train would start in about an hour; but it was four o'clock, being then thirteen hours late, when it actually pulled out.

About seven o'clock in the evening the conductor of the train, a young man of about twenty-four, came in. We asked him to sit down, and he appreciated the invitation, for our car was much more comfortable than his. He told us that his father had been a railway official and had died before the war. He himself had entered a school to study railway engineering but the war had compelled him to give up his studies to take care of his mother and married sister. In 1920 the family lived near Rostov and had quartered on it a few soldiers sick with typhus, and in nursing them the mother and sister caught the disease and died. The conductor's salary is a little over 100,000 rubles, in addition to which he receives a fairly good *paiok* of bread. The salary and *paiok* are insufficient to feed him and his little niece, so that his chief income is from buying and selling. Bread is cheaper in Moscow than at Rostov, and butter and fats are cheaper in the latter place than in the former; so he carries products from one market to the other. In each of his passenger cars are from sixty to seventy people, many of whom are engaged in buying food in one place and selling it in another. When I asked whether the cars were not overcrowded he smiled and said that he sometimes had as many as 120 passengers in one of these wagons. In addition to the travelers in the passenger cars, many people are riding in freight cars in which there is no heat at all. A car is reserved for the train crew, but into this car they often have to take sick passengers, a dangerous thing to do in view of the epidemic, but there is no help for it. On the train there is an abandoned girl of twelve, being passed from one train crew to another until she shall reach her grandmother in Tiflis.

11:00 P.M.—We arrived at Kozlov, an important junction, two hours ago. Thanks to the efforts of the conductor we secured some fuel. We were now, however, in other difficulties. Our car had not been inspected for some time, and the railway officials of the Southeastern line, on which we were to go from

now on, refused to take it over. Our conductor was once more our savior. He took us to the station master, and the station master conducted us to the technical adviser, and to him we explained our situation and appealed to him as man to man to send us on our way. He took the responsibility upon himself and gave orders that the car should be allowed to go on. Soon after, a whole crowd came to call on us, and we treated them to coffee, cigarettes, and such other refreshments as we had.

February 4, 10:00 A.M.—I went to bed last night thinking that our car would not be taken off until we reached our destination. About five-thirty this morning, when we were at Voronezh, the porter awakened me to say that a Cheka officer wished to talk to me. I assumed that he desired to see our papers and invited him in. He explained that he was at the head of a company (or regiment, I do not know which) of soldiers and that he was on his way south to fight the bandits and desired permission to ride with his two adjutants in our car. After a hasty consultation, Hutchinson and I agreed to let them in. This matter ended, I crawled between blankets to keep warm, for it was icy cold. Fifteen minutes later another porter came rushing in saying, "They are taking off our car for inspection." I sent for the technical adviser, but as he could not be found, I went to his office. He said that the car could not proceed because it needed inspection and because wagon-lits had no place on his line. I did not argue with him, but appealed to him that in view of the importance of our work he should not let technicalities stand in the way. This seemed to make some impression and he inquired whether we could not ride in the coupé of another car. This is impossible because of the large amount of baggage and other supplies we have. He then asked to see our papers. I hurried back to the car, leaving our Cheka friends, who were by this time personally interested, to plead for us. As I was returning, the Chekists met me with shouts of joy: "We are going," and right behind them was a railway official exclaiming, "It's all right, the car is going through." I stopped to thank the official and reached into my pocket to

get a package of "Fatimas" to offer him. He saw the movement and as my hand reached toward him, his hand closed on it, and the package disappeared with "many thanks" from him. The Chekist explained that during my absence he called up the Commissar of Railways, who gave orders that our car should proceed on its way. Our Cheka friend took all the credit to himself and remarked that "one good turn deserves another." He is welcome to the credit. I offered him an opportunity to earn more credit by asking him to get fuel. "Come on," said he to the porter, "and we will get wood." Fifteen minutes later two workmen brought six pieces of wood, the amount we usually secure through the help of the Chekists and the liaison officer. "If they had not brought it we should have arrested the whole gang," is the kind of talk we always hear from the mouths of the Chekists. They have two strong expressions—"arrest," and "shoot"; and both have lost their effectiveness.

After all this excitement I was about to return to bed when another Chekist came running in saying that they were again taking off our car. Another rush outside and there we learned that the original order to detach the car had not been countermanded. After a few minutes we got that straightened out, but I did not lie down again until we were a mile or two from Voronezh. Our Chekists hint that the railway officials "tried to get the car for their own joy-riding, and had it not been for us they would have succeeded, the d— s— of g—! They ought to be arrested and shot."

10:00 P.M.—We are in for more trouble. A few hours ago we had a call from the conductor of this division, asking to see our papers, and he discovered a flaw. He insists that according to the New Economic Policy and a decree which went into effect the first of this month all those who make use of a private car must produce a receipt showing that they have paid for it. I tried to tell him that the Soviet is, by agreement, bound to furnish us with cars free of cost and that, therefore, we cannot produce a receipt; but my statements did not convince him, or perhaps they did, for he disappeared to consult with his col-

leagues and I have not seen him since. I fear, however, that some time during the night there will be another attempt to unhook the car.

February 5.—We reached Rostov-on-the-Don at four-thirty in the afternoon. A porter was sent to invite the station agent to have a cup of tea. When he came, we requested that our car be attached to a Novorossisk train which was due to leave at seven-thirty. He said that this would be impossible. When we explained, he asked me to come to his office so that the matter might be taken up with his superiors. We called up a Mr. Markov, who made vague promises. I next sent for the Cheka men at the station and asked them to do what they could for us. In half an hour the acting station master returned saying that nothing could be done before tomorrow. About seven-fifteen a Cheka man reported that Markov had never spoken to me over the phone and knew nothing about us. With him I went back to the station and after some effort got a young woman on the line, who assured me that I had asked for an appointment with Markov and that he had granted it for Tuesday. Of course, I replied that I had asked for no appointment, that I had no favors to ask other than to be allowed to proceed to Novorossisk to send food to the dying on the Volga, and that every hour that we were detained meant more deaths. I said it loud enough for everyone there to hear, and those present began to exclaim that it was a shame to delay us. One of the Chekists ran here and another there to assemble the men in authority. One came and said that had I done this an hour before, all would have been well. I then reminded him that I had, by pure chance, done that very thing. More telephoning (while the bells were ringing and the train was about to pull out), and finally the girl over the telephone informed us that Markov had given orders that if there were still time one of the cars already attached to the train should be taken off and our car hooked on. With this news we hastened to the station master's office where we were told that Markov had just phoned that our car should be put on tomorrow! Our

Chekist was mad and insisted that I should at once make a complaint against Markov. Once more I appealed to them to do something to straighten out the tangle. They promised to do so, and I returned to the car with little hope. But I had not been there more than ten minutes before a man from the station agent's came announcing that in fifteen minutes we should go. He was followed by another railway official, the acting agent, and a Chekist, with the same news.

Rostov was the scene of severe fighting between the Reds and the Whites, especially the forces of Denikin. The English had their headquarters near here and some of the inhabitants still wear officers' coats and uniforms of English make, probably captured from Denikin. The Germans, when they invaded the Ukraine, came as far as Rostov. Had time permitted we should have been glad to remain over until the next day.

February 6.—We passed through cold, bleak, windswept country and I kept warm by thinking how hot it is here in the summer. Not many villages are seen, but now and then one catches a glimpse of a sleigh drawn by small horses, or a man herding a few sheep. Our train stopped at the village of Viselki where the women were selling bread, meat, milk, and such things to passengers at high cost. On the right there was a large building with a smoke stack, a former factory, now a pile of ruins, the result of the civil war. The Asiatic type of face becomes more pronounced the farther south we get. This part of Russia has not been struck by famine, and yet the price of bread is higher than in Moscow, probably owing to the fact that all roads lead to Moscow and more food is brought there.

5:00 P.M.—We passed Ekaterinodar (new name Krasnodar) and are in the midst of an early spring thaw. The fields are seas of slush, mud, water, and ice, and the small streams torrents of boiling clay. The land of these shiftless Cossacks seems to be poorly cultivated, no better than among our own poor whites. Today we noticed cars loaded with sacks of sunflower seeds on the way to some factory to be made into oil and butter.

February 8.—Reached Novorossisk about 11:30 P.M. on the sixth, where we were met by a member of our mission. He told us that the United States Destroyer "Fox" had been in port for two days ready to take us to Batum. From him we learned, also, that the first American corn ship, the "Wabenango" of New York, arrived on the sixth, and was welcomed by a brass band, a military company, and speeches. On the seventh I watched the unloading of the golden grain. But before this started a number of Greeks came to the dock with baskets to help themselves and were quite indignant when told that it was not allowed. "Why," they said, "it is for us. It was sent from America." They are not the only people who demand the grain. The railway employees all along the line have made it clear that they are to get a part of it, and the list of others who think they are entitled to some is endless. The hunger is relative—more and most hungry—and every one thinks of himself only.

The American Relief Administration has tackled the biggest and hardest job in its history, and we shall breathe a sigh of relief when it is done. It is working against almost insurmountable obstacles; against a government that is suspicious; against railway officials and employees who are thinking of themselves only; against a transportation system that is on its last legs; against dishonesty, trickery, demoralization, incompetence, apathy, famine, typhus, etc.

Novorossisk Port is an opening between a number of hills, bare of vegetation, at least at this time of the year, but shadowed by beautiful white clouds that hang low over them. The captain and officers of the "Fox" say that off these peaceful hills come the most terrific northeasters. We walked through the city and found that it resembled more the ports of Asia Minor than those of Russia. Just now it contains many Greeks, Turks, Jews, and Russians; but the Greek type predominates. The stores have the usual amount of junk. The cost of food is high, but no higher than in the north, and some articles of food are even cheaper. We priced potatoes at 15,000, bread (good

white) at 28,000 (black is less), and granulated sugar at 60,000 the pound.

The weather is ideal—warm spring days with abundance of sunshine, a delightful change from cold Moscow. The captain and officers of the "Fox" have made us very comfortable and we look forward to a pleasant voyage to Batum. The United States Destroyer "Sand" has just come in (two-thirty), and as soon as we take the mail on board we shall steam out.

Batum, February 10.—Soon after leaving Novorossisk we ran into a storm, with the result that we could not make Batum yesterday morning as hoped, and had to put out to sea for twenty-four hours. It was only today, at one o'clock, that we got in. I was sick all the time and kept my berth. As soon as the "Fox" came alongside the dock, a number of officials came on board, asking a lot of questions. The captain of the "Fox" tells us that yesterday a wire came from Moscow with orders not to allow the destroyer to enter. This message, according to the statement of the Near East Relief man, who is on board, came from the General Staff at Tiflis. The excuse is that a dreadnaught, formerly under command of General Wrangel, is in the Black Sea and has been caught sending wireless messages to France; ergo, the "Fox" should not be allowed to enter. It was allowed, nevertheless.

Tiflis, February 12.—We left Batum Friday evening at six-thirty in the car of Captain J. R. Phelps of the Near East Relief—a tiny Englishman in a tiny car—and reached Tiflis yesterday at noon. The ride, though not as comfortable as it might have been, was, nevertheless, far more comfortable than a year ago under the Mensheviks, and was done in much better time—thirty hours then, eighteen hours now. The weather is comfortable, there being little snow except on the mountain tops. At Tiflis, Yarrow sent his automobile and had us brought to his home, where we are very pleasantly situated.

All was quiet until yesterday, February 11, which was the anniversary of the attack of the Bolos upon the Georgians. It was believed that the Reds intended to celebrate, and the

students set to work to frustrate any such celebration. It was planned that all students from the primary grade to the university should march in a body to a place outside the city where the Georgians who were killed last year in the fight are buried, and that they should leave flowers on the graves. The police got wind of this and, suspecting that the leaders of the opposing political party were back of it, arrested many of them on the night of February 10. Yesterday morning the Chekists surrounded the students at one of the schools where they met to form for the march, and refused to let them advance. The youngsters sang the national hymn and abused the officials of the Commissariat of Education who came to try to persuade the children not to go on. Fearing trouble, an order was given to fire in the air—an order which had a quieting effect. Later some five hundred children were arrested but were freed the same day. The director of the Second Gymnasium, who tried to quiet the youngsters, was also arrested.

A large crowd had assembled at the University, where students passed resolutions to be published abroad stating that the present government is an imposed military dictatorship and has not the backing of the people. Chekists had a troop of cavalry come on the scene bringing with them the Commissar of Education, Kondalaki. He was hissed, and some of the students called to him: "Only a little while ago we hid you from the Tsar's police and now you are using the same methods as the Tsar." The cavalry scattered the students, not hesitating to use force, and a number of them, including some women, were beaten up.

As a result of yesterday's disturbances the University has been closed indefinitely, which means a week or two, probably until February 25, the day the Bolos came into possession of Georgia, a day which they plan to celebrate unless yesterday's demonstration makes them change their minds.

Today appeared an official explanation of the "manifestation" of the counter-revolutionists:

"Counter-revolutionists, principally Georgian Mensheviks,

Federalists, and National Democrats, decided to organize a manifestation on Saturday, February 11, the anniversary of the day of the rebellion of the workers against the régime of the Mensheviks. Documents found certify that the plan was to make a great noise before the Genoa Conference met. They hoped to stop work temporarily in the workshops, industrial enterprises, Soviet government offices, schools, etc. They decided to hold meetings which should pass resolutions of protest against the Soviet government—resolutions which had already been typed the day before—and send them abroad. These manifestations were a great failure. Not one office, workshop, or factory even thought of stopping work. Only a few schools (6 out of 31) and 230 students (out of 4,000) took part. Science did not lose anything if these gentlemen did not study on Saturday, and if some of them, who behaved like hooligans, were arrested. If this is the 'army' of the Mensheviks, we are sorry for them."

As to the financial crisis. A few months ago the Georgian government announced that within its territory Russian Soviet, Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijan money would be received in payment for goods. The merchants accepted readily the Soviet rubles, but not the others. Recently the Georgian government ruled that in paying taxes at least two-thirds of the money must be in Georgian and the other third may be in Soviet. As a result, during the last few days the merchants have refused to take Soviet money except at a discount. Three days ago they accepted payment half in Soviet; two days ago they insisted on one-third; yesterday they demanded one-fourth; and now they refuse to touch it at all. Soviet money was offered on the market at a rate of 2,000,000 to the dollar, while in Moscow the official rate is 220,000 to the dollar. There is also a persistent rumor that a man by the name of Shaplin came from Moscow to Georgia with a carload of Soviet rubles and started to buy foreign currency, offering as high as 800,000 rubles for a Turkish paper lira (equal to seventy-five cents). At once the price of goods went up; the merchants became

frightened at this avalanche of paper rubles, and a panic was the result. Today the situation is this: Soviet money is practically valueless and discredited; the Georgian bank is setting its own rate of exchange, which is very low for foreign money. The whole situation is a paper muddle.

February 14.—Yesterday the University opened again, but in view of the fact that about 300 students are locked up, the students who were free refused to return. It has been reported this morning by one of the professors that on Saturday the Tiflis workmen marched with a black flag to the spot where the Georgians, who fell last year, lie buried and put flowers on their graves. The Chekists and cavalry scattered them. It is said that in Batum and Kutais there were also demonstrations against the government.

The financial situation is not clearing up. Soviet money is still unacceptable and the Georgian government has not enough paper of its own to run the state. We had much difficulty in getting ten dollars changed, as none of the places visited had enough Georgian money to make the exchange. The biggest bill in Georgian money is a 5,000 note, a piece of paper somewhat larger and heavier than an American dollar note. Imagine the bulk of the equivalent of ten dollars.

Tiflis-Batum Line, February 17.—We left Tiflis Wednesday night, February 15, at eleven-thirty. In our party are Yarrow, director of the Caucasus Branch of the Near East Relief, two Georgian liaison officers, Hutchinson, and I. The Georgians have not only placed at our service a very fine salon car but also a cook, a quantity of food, plenty of wine, and some cognac.

During the night we ran into a blizzard and by morning we were snowbound in the mountains. We got clear in the course of the day and reached Zestafoni in the evening. It was our plan to visit the villages in the neighborhood in the two Fords we have brought along, but the natives warned us not to do so because of the heavy snow. After some consultation with them, it was decided to telegraph to the villagers to come and see us.

With that off their minds, the Georgians gave all their attention to our entertainment. They are very hospitable, very jovial, a bit vain, not over energetic either physically or mentally, but mighty nice fellows whom one remembers with pleasure and gratitude. We had so little in common with these men that it was difficult to carry on a conversation for any length of time. To keep them entertained, Hutchinson sprang on them the mathematical problem of the Arabs and the cocoanuts. As an incentive, I offered a prize of 100,000 rubles. The Georgians went at it with a rush, but after five minutes they gave it up. Thinking that the problem was too hard, Hutchinson gave them an easier one and I raised the prize to 200,000 rubles, but much to our dismay the increase in the size of the prize decreased their zeal. The Georgians reasoned that because the reward was twice as great the problem was twice as difficult, and they lost heart.

They then gave us some problems. A hunter saw ten geese, and shot three; how many were left? They expected us to say seven, and when we said three, they were disappointed. They asked another one about the man who had a wolf, a goat, and a head of cabbage to ferry across the stream, one at a time, in such a way that the wolf would not eat the goat, nor the goat the cabbage. We worked that one, too, and that created a panic. They made one more effort to down us and this time they half succeeded. Five riders, they said, agreed to have a race, the prize to go to the slowest horse. Each rider mounted his horse, but when the signal to start was given no one moved for fear of taking the lead. They sat there, each one urging the others to go first but no one budged. While in this predicament an old man passed by to whom the riders explained the situation. After listening he gave them some advice which they accepted, and immediately after dashed down the road at breakneck speed. What did he tell them to do? Hutchinson told them and they concluded that he was a wizard and gave up.

This morning, Friday, a little after ten o'clock we went to the city hall where we met a number of farmers from the

neighborhood. They explained their hard situation by saying that the wet fall of 1920, followed by a late spring, interfered with the seeding so that the grain did not mature. Though old farmers, these men were unable to answer such questions as the number of puds of grain needed for a *desiatin*, or the number of puds they harvested. They planted corn not in rows but broadcast, as they do wheat. They needed grain for food and grain for seed, but when asked which they preferred in case only one could be given, they agreed that seed grain was more important. They seemed honest and courteous, and had little of the beggar about them.

Our hosts invited us to a banquet, but we, knowing how short they were of food and long on drinks, declined on the plea that we were busy writing reports. Imagine our astonishment when, a few hours later, the mayor and all his dignitaries came with the banquet to the train, in order, they said, to save us time. The dinner consisted of delicious native dishes. The great object of our host, the mayor, was to get us drunk, and, as Yarrow did not imbibe, he concentrated all his energies on Hutchinson and me. He drank toasts and made long speeches; his associates drank toasts and made long speeches; we drank toasts and made long speeches. Consequently we talked much and drank not a little, but neither Hutchinson nor I crawled under the table, which was a great disappointment to the Georgians. After that our host insisted on having a little poker, a game which he said he once played. We agreed to it as the lesser of two evils, but we were saved by the approaching train time.

Kutais, Georgia, February 18.—We reached here at midnight and were met by a committee which proposed that our party should leave this morning in the two Fords for Oni, about seventy miles up the river Rion, and after passing the night there and gathering information, return Sunday over another route. Orders were given to the chauffeurs, of whom there are four, two for each machine, to be ready in time. During the night it rained so that it did not look very promising in the

morning, but we decided to go anyway. We waited for the Fords until nine, ten, half-past ten, and as they were still dilly-dallying we were obliged to give up our whole plan. To reach our destination in one day, after such a late start, and on the poor roads we were bound to run into, was impossible. All that the chauffeurs had to do was to fill two cans of gasoline to take along. Were they sabotaging, or were they incompetent? Probably sabotaging, as so many Russian workmen are now doing.

Having a little time to spare, we went into the town, one of the oldest cities in Georgia, dating back to about 1000 A.D. We tried to buy a few Georgian things, but today being Saturday and a Jewish rest day, there were few stores open. When we had returned to our car and had lunched, one of our Georgian liaison officers came to announce that the city fathers were preparing a banquet in our honor. We got cold feet, fearing that we should have to eat and drink too much, and said that we could not go. Our friendly guide was apparently afraid to deliver the message, for about three o'clock the head of the police appeared as a committee of one to conduct us to the feast. We repeated our thanks and our regrets to him and a little later to the other citizens. They were quite nice about it, but it was easy to see that they were hurt.

Sharopan, Georgia, February 19.—We left Kutais last evening at eight and arrived here at ten. The reception committee invited us to take the morning train to Tchaturi, the manganese mining center at the head of the Kvirila River. We left at seven-thirty and followed the windings of a narrow gauge railway through the gorges, going up all the time. Although there was snow all about, yet it was not very cold, and here and there we caught sight of wild flowers in bloom. It is a beautiful but a poor country, if one may judge from the small huts and the insignificant corn patches and vineyards.

Accompanying us was a tovarisch, a young man of some ability and deeply in earnest about his communism. He has been a Communist for many years and in 1914, when the war

broke out, he and many of his fellows organized strikes in the oil fields in the hope of weakening the Russian army, causing its defeat and the downfall of the old régime. He was caught and sent to Siberia where he remained until 1916, when he escaped to Baku. There he was again arrested and again sent to Siberia, and freed by the March revolution. Last year, when the Bolos came into power in the Caucasus, he, as a Georgian, was detailed for special work in Tiflis. In the course of our conversation today the question of the Dempsey-Carpentier fight came up, and it was interesting to hear him describe it. He said that for the purpose of reporting the fight all the telegraph wires of the bourgeois world were connected up with America and three thousand scribes were appointed to note every move of the fighters. Nine hundred thousand seats were sold and thousands watched the bloody battle from the house tops and other elevated places. Carpentier had his skull fractured, eyes gouged, teeth knocked out, one side of his face smashed in, fingers broken, and "this amused the bourgeoisie." In Paris it had been announced that in case of a Carpentier victory, twelve cannon shots would be fired; in case of defeat, three. All during that eventful day the bourgeoisie of Paris waited, their only thought being the fight and their only prayer, a Carpentier triumph. When late in the day the cannon boomed out one, two, and then three, every one listened with baited breath, and when no more were heard Paris and France went into mourning.

Tiflis, February 20.—We came to Tchaturi about ten o'clock and were met by a committee. We heard the old tale of woe—no food, no work, no money. Before us were huge piles of manganese ore that had been mined before 1914, which had been used to pay the running expenses of the Mensheviks after the war, and which was now being shipped out to support the Bolsheviks. When the mayor complained of hard times, we attempted to cheer him by saying that if enough ore went out, food would come in in exchange. He smiled and remarked that sixty-five per cent of the manganese belonged to foreign in-

vestors, thirty-five to the government at Tiflis, and that all his people get out of it is their wages for loading cars.

Tchaturi (population 1914, 20,000; 1922, 8,000) is a dirty, little, run-down community. Though poor, its inhabitants are most hospitable and seemed pleased when we accepted their invitation to luncheon. While we were still at the table a messenger announced that our train would depart in a few minutes. Five hours before, we had been assured that there would be no train before ten o'clock at night; an hour before we were doubly assured that the next train would leave at eight; yet at four-thirty we departed.

We are spending the night in the car and are fortunate indeed to have Yarrow with us. Yarrow is as fine a representative of America as one finds anywhere abroad. He has executive ability, tact, humor, the confidence of the officials of the country in which he works, and the loyalty of his subordinates. He works very hard between the time of his morning song (famous throughout the Near East) and his midnight rubber of bridge. To us who have been knocking about in a land of sorrow and intrigue, it has seemed like coming to paradise to be taken into the Yarrow home.

Tonight Yarrow's usual luck in bridge turned against him and he lost, in cut-throat, one million rubles, more than half of which went to Hutchinson. When we tired of playing we prevailed upon Yarrow to tell us some of his experiences in the Caucasus during the World War. Here it is without quotation marks:

YARROW'S STORY

When the war broke out, Yarrow was at Van, Eastern Turkey, directing the educational work of the American Board of Foreign Missions. Van was a hotbed of Armenian Nationalism, although the population was not openly hostile and the leaders preached loyalty. The Turkish officials were distrustful, however, and did not push energetically the mobilization of the Armenians. The relations between the two peoples were

strained because of the fact that Russia had organized an Armenian Division, made up of Armenians from Russia and other parts of the world, at the head of which was General Antranik, a Russian Armenian, and ardent anti-Turk. During the fall of 1914 this Division had considerable success and there was some reason to suppose that by spring of 1915 Van would fall into the hands of the Russians. This success of the Armenian Division intensified the racial hatreds of the two peoples, hatreds which increased as the spring campaign approached. To anticipate possible co-operation between the Armenian Division and the local Armenian population, the Turks, in the month of April 1915, commenced activities against the Armenian inhabitants of Van. The authorities demanded heavy money contributions and a large contingent of young men for the army. The local leaders urged compliance and even went about assisting in the carrying out of these exactions, but the Turks would not wait. Assuming that their demands would be refused, the Turks surrounded the Armenian part of Van with the intention of bombarding it. Before doing so, the Turkish governor, Djevedt Bey, offered the Americans protection within his lines; when that was declined, he offered to send a military guard within the Armenian quarter to protect the Americans. That, also, was declined because the Americans realized that the real purpose of the offer was to put a Turkish fighting force against the Armenians. The Americans, however, told Djevedt Bey that if he wished to send his guard they could not refuse to receive it. During these parleys, the Armenians had collected weapons and prepared for the siege, so that by the time the governor had decided to send in his guard the Armenians were strong enough to refuse to admit it. After the siege had lasted twenty-eight days, the Turks conceived the idea of starving out the inhabitants by driving in from the surrounding country about twenty-five thousand Armenians. Though the Americans were neutral in a military way, they helped the besieged by taking charge of the food situation. When the Turks realized that the Americans stood between them and their prey, they

concentrated their fire on the American section and hit nearly every building. About the middle of May the Turks raised the siege because of the approach of the Russian army and the Armenian Division. The Russians remained in Van until about August 1, when they commenced their retreat (partly because of the false report that large forces of Turks were massing against them and partly because of the failure of the campaign in Poland and the need of concentrating the Russian forces in Europe), a retreat which soon became a mad rush; for not only the military but also the civilian population tried to get out, and among them the American colony. This group consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Yarrow, Dr. and Mrs. Usher, Mrs. Reynolds, and Misses Rodgers, Knapp, and Bond. Of this number six (Mr. and Mrs. Yarrow, Dr. and Mrs. Usher, Miss Rodgers, and Miss Bond) were down with typhus, and one of them, Mrs. Usher, later died of it. The Russian Red Cross took the invalids under its care as far as Erivan and from there they made their way to Tiflis and New York. When the retreating mass had come as far as the valley of Bergri, the Turkish vanguard was already in possession of the heights and from there shelled the refugees and the soldiers in the hope of retarding the march and seizing the war material. The Americans were almost among the last, and two hours after they passed, the road was cut. Mrs. Reynolds broke a leg in the mad rush and later died from the complications that set in. A year after this retreat, Yarrow had occasion to go over the ground, and for a distance of fifteen miles the road was covered with skeletons of women, children, and old men, the remains of eight thousand Armenian refugees who had been cut off.

When it was learned in America how the Armenians and other Christian peoples were suffering in the Near East, the American Commission for Armenian and Syrian Relief was formed, largely through the indirect efforts of Mr. Morgenthau. A number of Americans were sent to the Caucasus to undertake the work of relief and to repatriate the Armenians, for during the winter of 1915-16 Van was once more in the

hands of the Russians. By spring, however, the Turks were again in possession of the place and all the efforts of the Americans were practically wasted.

Yarrow and his party returned to the Caucasus in August 1916 to assist in the relief. But, as noted above, the organization on the field had by that time broken down and it was necessary to start all over again. Making Erivan his headquarters, Yarrow opened orphan homes and organized local industries. Everything went well until March 1918, when the Russian army collapsed completely and the German and Turkish forces began their march on Tiflis. The United States Consul advised the Americans to leave the Caucasus, and with other allied citizens, about fifty in all, they banded themselves with Yarrow as their leader and started their exodus.

To leave the Caucasus at this time was no easy matter. During the late fall of 1917 the Russian soldiers from the Turkish and Persian fronts began to desert by the thousands and to take possession of every means of locomotion in sight. Most of them lived on the war supplies which they had taken with them, selling valuable guns and horses for a mere song. Their bitterest enemies were the Tartars, worked upon by Turkish and German propaganda, who waylaid them in the hope of securing guns and other loot. The Russians had to fight at Nakhitchivan, Julfa (south of Erivan), and Elizavetpol (between Tiflis and Baku). The British attempted to reorganize this fleeing mob and to put it under the command of British officers, but nothing came of the plan. The attempt to unite the three Caucasian republics late in 1917 and early in 1918 for the purpose of opposing the Turks also came to naught because the Tartars in Azerbaijan worked against it. In February 1918 Yarrow started with an Armenian train from Tiflis to Erivan. It was attacked on the way by an irregular force of Tartars, but the Americans armed the crew and a handful of Armenians and drove off the enemy.

One winter day Yarrow and an American by the name of Maynard got on an Erivan-Tiflis train filled with Russian

soldiers. The two "Amerikantsi" were regarded with suspicion and were examined a number of times to determine whether they were German spies. The cars were overcrowded, and it was with great difficulty that one seat was secured, which the two Americans occupied by turns. In the course of the night a Russian soldier, who was lying in a bunk just over the heads of the Americans, raised the cry that his purse was gone. He looked everywhere, asked every one to move, without, however, finding it. Finally he turned to Maynard, who was half asleep, and asked him to get up. Maynard demurred; but when Yarrow got him on his feet, the soldier's purse fell out. There was now a double charge—the Americans were not only spies but thieves. At Alexandropol, Yarrow and Maynard slipped away and went to Tiflis on another train.

Another time Yarrow and a man by the name of Gracey left Erivan for Tiflis in a train of intoxicated Cossacks. Thinking that they would be safer in the cab, they climbed in there only to find that the engineer and firemen were as drunk as the rest. Soon a Cossack officer appeared announcing that in view of the fact that the crew was drunk, he would take charge of the engine. He proved to be the drunkest of all. He removed the engineer from his place and after settling himself comfortably, drew out his sword and gave an exhibition of how Cossacks fight. All those in the cab sought safety by lying down or flattening themselves on the floor. While he was displaying his skill, the engine was left without any control. After some minutes of this exhibition, the officer sheathed his sword and proceeded to work the levers of the engine.

The Yarrow Party, the name given to the group of Americans and others who tried to get away from the Caucasus in March 1918, with great difficulty reached Baku. This city was in a turmoil. The Bolos and Armenians were in control and the Tartars tried to force them out. For several days there was severe street fighting, causing the death of about two thousand persons. The stories of Bolshevik massacres which have been published in the papers are denied by Yarrow.

These disturbances created a panic and everybody who could tried to get away. Thousands of people crowded the wharves and shipping offices in the hope of finding an opportunity to take passage. After many attempts, Yarrow chartered a ship; but when it came time to depart the crew went on strike and insisted on getting part of the passage money. With the aid of the Soviet officials this little difficulty was straightened out and the crew agreed to sail the following day. In order to get aboard without attracting the attention of the thousands of other refugees, the Yarrow Party set out from different parts of the city and reached the ship at the same time. As soon as all had embarked, the ship dropped down the stream.

On coming on board, Yarrow discovered that every cabin was filled with the families of the crew and the only place left for his party was the smoking-room and the hold. It took four days to reach Astrakhan, and there a wait of ten days was necessary for the first boat up the Volga. These steamers were still in good condition but the travelers were obliged to prepare their own meals and look after themselves in general. At Samara the party secured two private cars and persuaded the Czecho-Slovak soldiers to attach these to their train. However, before they started, an order came from Moscow not to permit the Czecho-Slovaks to leave. The plans were accordingly changed and the cars were attached to a regular passenger train. The porters of the cars took possession of the best compartments and refused to render any service to their bourgeois passengers. After spending twenty days in traveling, they reached Vladivostok.

February 21.—We arrived at Tiflis last evening and decided to leave tomorrow for Armenia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has notified us that the car we are in is needed by the head of the government for going to Moscow, and therefore we can have it only as far as Erivan.

In Armenia; Tiflis-Erivan train; in sight of Mount Ararat, February 22.—Yesterday morning in Yarrow's office we

learned that the president of the Armenian Republic and the chairman of the Relief Committee were passing through Tiflis on their way to Batum to welcome the shipload of Armenian refugees who fled during the war from Turkish Armenia to Mesopotamia and are now being returned by the English to Armenia. We asked the chairman to come with us to Armenia or to give us the statistical data, which *he said* he had. A quarter of an hour before the train pulled out, the chairman returned bringing an Armenian to accompany us, for he (the chairman) could not change his plans. As to statistics, he jotted down the number of orphans, and gave us a hard-luck story which we did not want at all. The Armenians seem to think that we are collecting stories of Turkish atrocities for American consumption.

We left Tiflis about one o'clock and in a short time found ourselves in a country which was quite familiar—the Rocky Mountain region, with all its sunshine and dryness. Our train began climbing, and after several hours we were in snow-covered foothills.

This morning (Wednesday) we were snow-bound and in sight of cold mountains and valleys. By ten o'clock the road was sufficiently cleared to allow us to proceed. We passed a number of ruined villages and our Armenian guide never missed an occasion to recount that here three thousand Armenian women and children were massacred, and there five thousand, etc. After leaving Alexandropol the snow began to disappear in the plains, but the mountains not far distant looked white and cold. About four o'clock Mount Ararat loomed into view, offering a very beautiful and majestic sight. A half-hour later, Little Mount Ararat showed himself just behind his big brother. Soon the sunset glow played on the white snow of the mountain, the summit of which was crowned with a fine ring of white cloud, and over all was a colorful sky. We arrived at Erivan before midnight, and as soon as our presence became known a committee came to welcome us and to offer us hospitality.

Erivan, February 23.—At nine o'clock this morning a representative of the Armenian government came to the station with two autos to take us to the Near East Relief headquarters. It was a beautiful sunny morning and as we walked out on the station platform and caught sight of Mount Ararat and the other high mountains we became quite enthusiastic, but our enthusiasm cooled as we moved toward the town. Erivan, according to the Armenians, was built by Noah. There are others who deny this, but as these very authorities have proved their untrustworthiness by denying the flood and the stranding of the ark on Ararat, I prefer the statement of the Armenians. External evidence is in favor of the Noah theory, for Erivan is old, ragged, and dirty. Erivan has been the battle-ground for ages, between Turks and Persians, Turks and Russians, Russians and Persians.

At eleven o'clock we went to call on the president's substitute, a young man of about twenty-five, and were received by him and the Assistant Minister of Agriculture. We had about fifteen minutes' discussion over the question whether we should begin our labors today or tomorrow, and finally at what time today. It was agreed that we should meet at the Ministry of Agriculture at two o'clock to get the information we needed. At the appointed time we came and found the Minister himself, who, according to the morning reports, was out of town. He talked straight, bluffed little, and did not try sob stuff. His story differed greatly from the reports that had reached us from other sources and indicated that the situation in Armenia is not nearly as critical as we have been led to believe.

Friday, February 24.—This morning Hutchinson, Morris of the Near East Relief, and I drove out to Echmiadzin, the seat of the Cathlicos, the head of the Armenian Church. We passed through an arid country, much like parts of Arizona or Wyoming. The houses were made of rock or adobe and all showed signs of wear and war. At Echmiadzin we were greeted by the Cathlicos himself, Gregory V, an elderly man. He told us of the poverty of his people and their needs.

After a bit he led the discussion to other subjects and related something of the history of his church. He said that when Christ was alive the king of Armenia heard of him, and, being ill, sent word to invite him to come and heal him, promising to treat him better than the Jews did. Christ, being the Son of God, could not come, for he had to return to heaven, but sent one of his disciples, St. Bartholomew, who healed the king and converted the people to the new faith.

The Cathlicos next took up the efforts of Christian missionaries in Armenia and deplored their activity on the ground that it results in dividing families and bringing strife. Often these missionaries, he added, go so far as to make converts by underhanded means. "Why do not these missionaries go to work among the heathen instead of trying to convert us, who were Christians when they (missionaries) were heathen?" The monastery in which the Cathlicos lives was built, according to tradition, by St. Gregory, in 303 A.D.; but there is little left of that old building. The oldest of the existing buildings dates back to the seventeenth century.

Alexandropol, Saturday, February 25.—At luncheon yesterday we learned that the Armenians were planning a dinner today, Saturday, which piece of news did not fill us with joy. At four o'clock Yarrow arrived and announced that he could finish all his affairs in a few hours and could return to Tiflis at night if we were ready. We promised that we should be. When the Armenian officials learned of this, they changed their invitation to a tea for eight o'clock. After dinner at seven we went to the tea at the home of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, where we met many of the other ministers. The tea consisted of a table loaded with choice foods and wines, suggesting a land of abundance rather than want. There were, of course, the usual toasts and speeches, in which the Armenians tried to impress upon us the thought that they counted on American aid. It was nearly eleven o'clock when we broke away and started for the station and piled into Yarrow's car.

This morning at nine we arrived at Alexandropol, a city

that was in the hands of the Turks until about a year ago. The Turks plundered it of everything that had any value, destroyed many of the buildings, and left the population destitute. The Near East Relief gathered together many of the fatherless of the neighborhood and put them into orphanages. Orphans, orphans everywhere; and one wonders how Russia is going to solve the orphan problem. During the last six months I have seen tens of thousands of them herded together in different buildings, and no one knows just what is going to become of them. In some of the orphanages here the inmates have reached maturity; there is nothing for them to do and they are kept on. The Near East Relief is doing splendid work, which is as far above the similar efforts made by the Soviet government as day is from night. It is time for the Armenians to assume the care of these children and for the Americans to bring their work to an end. As long as we feed them, the Armenians will not. One of the Near East Relief men related that not long ago an Armenian brought two children to his orphanage and when told that there was no room, he turned in anger to the American: "No more room!" he shouted. "Make room! It is your affair!" Saying this, he walked off and left the children.

The porter of the car is an old peasant with an honest, kindly face. He was born in Wiatka and is a veteran of the Turkish war of 1877 and 1878. He is proud of the old army, the old officers, and even of the hardships of those days. During the Turkish war he and his companions, about two thousand of them, came one day to a village near Kassan Kala (east of Erzerum) and found it deserted and empty. It was very cold, and the soldiers, in order to warm themselves, decided to move some of the big, heavy grindstones that were lying about. When one had been raised, grain and other food was found underneath. The commander was notified, and a thorough search was made underneath all the stones and much booty was located. An oven was erected, fuel was found, and in a short time there was plenty of bread. A day or two later a flock of sheep was captured, and for two weeks the men had enough to eat. Then

came the order to advance and take Erzerum. This fortress was in the hands of the Turks, who were on the defensive, allowing the Russians to weaken themselves by cold, hunger, and disease. Indeed, the situation of the Russians was desperate. One day a lieutenant by the name of Shitz called the soldiers together and asked them whether they would follow him in a surprise attack on Erzerum or remain where they were and die of cold. They volunteered to go. It was so cold and misty that in daytime the city was hardly to be seen, but at night the twinkling of the lights was visible. One night the soldiers sneaked up, overpowered the watch at one of the gates, and rushed into the barracks with a whoop and a hurrah. The Turkish garrison was taken by surprise and escaped in such clothes as it had on. The Russian soldiers grabbed boots and coats, filled their stomachs and their clothes with food, and made merry the rest of the night. In this way they wasted valuable time which the enemy made use of. When the Russians started back they were attacked, and of the two thousand that came not more than a hundred returned to their snow shelter of the day before. Though there were thousands of Russian soldiers near, there was no means of communicating with them, no way of calling on them for assistance.

This old veteran was very eager to talk about the Tsar. I told him that he was dead, but he assured me that the Tsar was alive in Japan with his daughter, the Empress of Japan. He told me also that another daughter of the Tsar had committed suicide in Batum a year ago, leaving a note behind her that she could not stand the pangs of hunger any longer. The Russian inhabitants of Batum tried to give her an honorable burial, but the tovarischi interfered and hid her out of sight.

Tiflis-Baku, March 2.—We had a grand rush this morning and got away at ten-thirty, city time. We have the same car which the Minister of Foreign Affairs took from us at Erivan on the plea that it was needed for the President of the Georgian Republic to go to Moscow. In this part of the world there seem to be a number of governments functioning side by side and

getting in each other's way. For example, the Minister of Foreign Affairs tells us that the car is needed for the President of the Republic, while the Director of Railways pays no attention to that and gives the car to us. Yesterday at the Ministry of Agriculture, one of the important officials said that the Ministry has received fifty thousand puds of Australian wheat for the use of the hungry population, but cannot get possession until it has paid the freight to the Ministry of Railways. It cannot do that because the presses cannot print money fast enough to supply the demand.

The money question is a serious and amusing one. I have with me about fifty millions of Soviet money, about ten millions of Georgian money, and about ten millions of Azerbaijan money, besides a lot of money from these countries that I picked up because it is no longer legal. All together it fills my suitcase quite full. Last night we invited the Minister of Foreign Affairs to dinner and to pay for it we brought along a good-sized bag with several millions.

Riding with us, as guide and protector, is a nephew of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic, formerly a teacher of Russian, Tartar, and Persian, and now an important diplomatist. He complained that he and his other fellow officials are starving while those higher up, the commissars, are eating chocolates. He is not an enthusiastic supporter of the government and does not even claim to be a Communist. However, he says that the condition of the Caucasus is better now than a year ago, when three different authorities were in control; and on this point I agree with him, for I was here at that time. There were then three frontiers to cross, and the national chauvinistic spirit of each country made communication difficult.

As we came to the Kura River and passed from Georgia into Azerbaijan, the diplomat said that under the governments of over a year ago many people died at this point from heat and cold, just because they did not have the proper authorizations for traveling and did not know how to get them. It is better now. It is better, also, from another point of view. Formerly,

Georgian trains could get no fuel from Baku; Baku could get no goods from Batum; Armenia could get neither fuel from Baku nor goods from Batum; Armenians shot Tartars in Armenia, and Tartars in Baku stabbed Armenians. The Bolos, by bringing the three governments together, have really rendered a distinct service to humanity.

The Bolos are helping these Caucasus states in other ways. During the year that has just passed, Moscow has given Armenia one hundred thousand puds of bread, one million five hundred thousand gold rubles, much cloth, etc.; and now there is on the way from Russia the machinery for a large cotton mill and a creamery to be put up at Erivan. Georgia, also, has had a considerable quantity of gold which must have come from Moscow, and it is reported on equally good authority that Azerbaijan received its pile. Neither Georgia nor Armenia was self-supporting before the war, and both depended on Russia to supply the lack of food, a condition which is likely to continue in the future. Many of the thinking men realize this and say openly that their economic future is bound up with that of Russia. For the time being the domination of Russia is resented by two elements, the Whites of the old régime and the Nationalists; but their opposition is largely sentimental. It is a question of Ins and Outs. Many people in the Caucasus speak of the evils of bolshevism without really knowing what they are. Bolshevism as it existed in Russia in 1918-20 was never tried here. From the very beginning, that is, a little over a year ago, when the Bolos came, instructions were sent from Moscow not to repeat the mistakes of the Communists in Russia. There was little requisitioning; there was no prohibition of private trade; there was comparatively little oppression of the Whites and the Mensheviks.

The country we are passing through suggests Arizona and New Mexico—dry, dusty, parched by hot winds and dust storms. Irrigation ditches and piles of baled hay intensify the resemblance to our Southwest. At the stations, which are few and far between, the usual loafers are in evidence. Near some

of the stations one sees high towers, like watch towers, which according to our Tartar companion are used for sleeping quarters in the hot summertime.

March 3.—Ganzha, as it is now called, or Elizavetpol of the Russians, was reached late last night. A committee from the city came to call, but as we were already in bed they departed, leaving word that they would return this morning at nine or ten. When they failed to appear, we started to walk and met them on the way. Ganzha is about four versts from the station, and on inquiring the reason therefor we were told that the native population at the time the road was built expressed a wish not to have it nearer.

As we approached the uiezdispolkom, we noticed a large crowd of people and soldiers, with flags, artillery, and other military accoutrements. Today being Friday (Moslem Sunday) and the anniversary of the artillery unit stationed here, the town was in holiday dress. We went upstairs, were introduced to the principal officers, and were invited to view the celebration. A number of speeches were made and between them the band played the "International." One of the speeches I could understand. It was in praise of the Communists. Their rule was the only rule of the people, by the people, and for the people. The civil war had ruined the country, but in war all things are fair, and those who protested against the Soviet régime were the only ones guilty. Now the world as a whole has recognized that the Soviet is mighty because it has the support of the people and therefore the world has decided to cease warring against the Soviet and come to its aid.

After the military celebration we met with the chairman of the ispolkom and his young associates. The chairman welcomed us and said that he saw in our visit a sign of *rapprochement* between our two governments. Almost everywhere we come this subject is touched, and I cannot be sure just what is meant by the expression. As Zinoviev said in his speech in Petrograd, the fact that the world offered to help Russia in its famine was *ipso facto* a victory for the Soviet. No doubt many of these

men regard our visit as an acknowledgment of our past mistakes and a willingness to go more than halfway to make up. They, on their part, welcome us as prodigals and show a desire to forget and forgive. On the other hand, there are those who welcome us and drink a toast to better relations because they realize that we can help them and that without our aid they are powerless. Anyway, we listened to his long speech in Russian, or as he called it, the "international language," and before he had finished, he started to tell us of the suffering of his people, of the thousands of hungry and dying refugees of Moslem faith driven from Armenia by the Christians. He would have gone on for a time longer had we not stopped him to set him right on the purpose of the mission and to explain to him the kind of data we need. He replied rather resentfully that he did not have that kind, as if to say that the only data we need is his statement that the people are hungry, and that it is for Uncle Sam to furnish food. When we had straightened out this detail, we were taken to the Agricultural Bureau where we secured such information as the young Russian refugee had, which was little enough. This part of the world had raised considerable cotton and few cereals, but the war upset everything.

From the Agricultural Bureau we went to dine with the commissars. Hutchinson inquired why the bread was so dark and how it was made. The hosts replied that it was dark because of the wheat, and that it was made from dough. When the question was pursued further as to the dough, they said that from each baking a piece of dough was left over which was used for the next baking. Indeed, the question seemed to them a bit silly and one wag remarked that it reminded him of another question whether the egg or the hen came first.

Malaria fever, which carries off hundreds each year, was a subject for discussion. When Hutchinson suggested that they use the abundance of crude oil which nature has given them to rid themselves of the mosquitoes they shook their heads. "Oil will not do it, but cognac will." This cognac remedy dates back to the time when a number of Englishmen built the water works

for Baku. These men had their faces covered with mosquito netting, ate plenty of beefsteak, drank plenty of cognac, and not one of them had malaria. This proves conclusively the value of cognac as medicine.

Late in the afternoon we parted with our hosts, visited the old mosque and the bazaar, and finally reached the station. There we talked with an official who assured us that it is quite impossible to work with the Bolos, that nothing will come of all their talk because it is only talk. "The Bolos themselves realize the hopelessness of their situation and pray for the European capitalists to come and pull them out of the mud, and are ready to make any concessions. Their hopes are set on the Genoa Conference."

Ganzha was captured by the Russians in January 1804 and named Elizavetpol in honor of the Empress Elizaveta, wife of Alexander I. The Persians who lorded it here for many years have left the impression of their civilization, the most conspicuous specimen of their architecture being the fine mosque built by Abbas the Great in the seventeenth century. The Russians put up a number of substantial buildings, but most of these are now heaps of ruins. Since 1917, Azerbaijan has had one grand killing party. It started in the summer of that year by the peasants butchering their landlords and their families. When the Bolos came into power, the Musavatisti (Moslem Menshevik Nationalists) took control and to the tune of "Azerbaijan for the Azerbaijanians" cut the throats of Russians and Armenians. What the Musavatisti needed was arms, and to get them they waylaid the demobilized or deserting Russian soldiers from the Turkish and Persian fronts as they were making their way home. Near Elizavetpol took place one of the bloodiest battles between the Russian soldiers and the Azerbaijan Tartars. In the spring of 1918 the Communist Shaumiian, supported by Moscow, with the aid of the deserting and demobilized Russian soldiers and Armenians, attacked the Musavatisti and their Turkish allies and succeeded in establishing a Soviet form of government. But this success was not of long duration,

for the Turks returned with large forces, drove out the new ministers, and put in the old. Their position became quite untenable in the latter part of the year 1918, and they therefore invited the English, who were in Persia, to come and help them, which the English did, but for a short time only. In April 1920, a Bolshevik army came to Baku and with the aid of the local Communists drove the Musavatisti from power and took the reins into their own hands. When in the fall of 1920 the Kemalists attacked Armenia, then governed by the Tashnaki (Armenian Mensheviks), the Azerbaijan Red Army, aided by the Armenian Bolos, marched against the disciples of the Prophet and forced them to retreat. This was followed by the organization of a Communist government in Armenia. Just a little over a year ago the Red armies from Russia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia went into Georgia, drove that Menshevik government to Paris, and formed a federation. Since then the killing has come to an end. They all feel like the morning after a big drunk: house burned, wife dead, children in rags, food gone.

Baku, March 5.—Our train pulled into Baku about three in the afternoon and an hour later two representatives of the government came to call, to offer their services, and to announce that two rooms had been reserved for us at the hotel. We thanked them for their kindness, intimated that it would be more convenient for all concerned if we remained in the car, and that we should appreciate it greatly if they would at once find the statisticians with whom we could consult, for we wish to depart tomorrow. One of the two, a man, started at once for the city; but the other, a woman, remained. For some time I was a bit uncertain as to the sex of the individual. To the waist the said person was dressed and looked like a man, but from the waist down there was a skirt. In the course of the conversation, said individual remarked, "I am married and have four children and a husband." This outburst of personal information settled the question. During the whole period of our stay in Baku she was never very far from us, and her presence reminded me of the time when I was a student in Paris and

the King and Queen of Norway visited there. President and Madame Loubet showed them all the honors, took them everywhere, so much so that the Parisian wags wrote a little poem about Mrs. Loubet and the King, the refrain of which was "but there was one place where Madame Loubet could not follow." The Azerbaijan man-lady reminded me also of another Russian woman, whom I met in Petrograd in 1917, a mother of four children. She assured herself that she looked like Napoleon, and did all that she could to dress in a way to suggest the Emperor. When I was introduced to her she was standing beside a table and I took her for a man. However, when a little later she moved aside and I caught a glimpse of a skirt I changed my mind. I saw a good bit of her, off and on, in the course of the summer, and learned that nothing pleased her so much as to be told that she resembled the great warrior and had a masculine mind. She said again and again that were it not for her children she would throw her petticoats into the ragbag. The revolution emancipated her, the children scattered, and she was left to do as she pleased. She pleased to become a shoemaker, to wear trousers, and to smoke a pipe. The Azerbaijan "Napoleon" is secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and speaks eleven languages. Why eleven I do not know unless it is to correspond with the eleven teeth in her mouth, but that is not a good reason. She is a Communist, and has fought against the Turks and Denikin. Four or five years ago the Party took charge of her and ordered her about from place to place. Her four children are in Moscow, the oldest sixteen, the youngest eleven; and during these four years she has not seen them. Her husband was for a long time with the children, but now he also has been "commandeered" and is away from both wife and children. So strong is party discipline and loyalty that she bears all hardships without a murmur. She works hard, talks a great deal, sleeps little, smokes much, and eats one square meal a day.

About five o'clock we started out, in a red automobile, to see the city, and drove along the seashore and through the market.



Top: *A typical Dagestan aul*

Bottom: *Gimri, Dagestan, birthplace of Shamil*

Baku is less destroyed than many other cities that we have visited, but aside from that it has little in its favor. Like the cities of the Volga, it shows that at the outbreak of the war it began to be a real modern metropolis, to build fine buildings, and to lay out parks. This is all past history, and some day all this work will be done over again. The few people we have met, all officials, have their hearts and minds set on the coming of the capitalists. "If they only would come," they can have anything they ask. After the view of the city, we dined as the guests of the government in the "New Europe," then went to call on the chairman of the commissars, and explained to him our mission. We also went to see the *Rose of Stamboul*, in an opera house built by one of Baku's oil-kings before the war, but the Rose charmed neither by her looks nor by her voice and the man-lady talked too much. We departed after the second act.

At nine-thirty this morning the red car took us to the Ministry of Agriculture. Before the war Azerbaijan came within about six millions of puds of raising enough foodstuff for itself. The shortage was made up from other parts of Russia in exchange for oil, copper, fish, cotton, silk, fruit, hides, and such things. The war and the revolution have crippled production, and consequently both Russia and Azerbaijan are in want. Both of these regions, especially the last-named, are turning to the more primitive self-sufficient social state. This process of reversion is noticeable all through the Caucasus. Hardly anything is raised for export, and the energies of the people are spent almost wholly in food production. In the place of cotton, silk, and grapes, wheat, barley, corn, and millet are planted. In Azerbaijan before the war twice as much wheat was raised as barley, which was used for horse feed; but now the proportion is reversed because the peasants have learned that barley is easier to produce and yields more. Indian corn was almost unknown ten years ago, but during the last three years its acreage has increased very fast. In place of melon patches, one sees fields of beans. But notwithstanding these efforts it is doubtful

whether any progress is made. Peasants are still afraid that the government which gives out seed with one hand will requisition the crop with the other. During these years of trouble, agricultural stations have been abandoned, veterinary posts have disappeared, scientific fighting of pests has come to an end, and diseases among animals have spread. Thousands of acres are ruined by the locusts and field-mice, and thousands of head of live stock die from preventable diseases. Before the war the Azerbaijan flocks pastured in the cool valleys of the Armenian mountains during the summer, but after the revolution they were kept in the sultry malarial swamps, where they died like sheep. To save them from such a fate and to snatch them from the requisitioning hands of the Bolos, a number of stockmen drove their herds into Persia and sold them. Camels, oxen, and black buffaloes were mobilized by the Red Army and used so hard that they dropped by the wayside. As a result, the number of domestic animals is a fraction of what it was before 1917. What is said of animal kind is also true of human kind. In addition to the warriors killed, thousands died of diseases and starvation, and still others have wandered off and disappeared, no one knows where. Village doctors are as scarce as drugs, and grandmother remedies mixed with incantations are reappearing. Out of a population of 2,800,000 which Azerbaijan claimed, it is doubtful if it now has 1,800,000. The most discouraging feature of the present situation is the general demoralization, the feeling that nothing can be done, that there is no use struggling against the strong tide which is sure to carry one out to sea unless help comes from outside. Everywhere one turns he sees hands outstretched, hears voices pleading for food, for seed, for implements, for machinery, for clothing, and above all for capitalists.

We lunched at a native restaurant and on native dishes and listened to native music, all good in its way, especially the food. After eating we took a walk in the city, but did not go far because "Napoleon" was ever at our heels and we could not shake her. There were but few good things on display in the

shops, all such stuff being in the hands of the State or out of sight, for the fear of confiscation is still strong. From shopping we returned to the station, took possession once more of our car, and said goodbye to "Napoleon."

Food is very high here and the numerous currencies in circulation make the head ache. At Tiflis I paid ten dollars for eight millions of Azerbaijan money. Here I can get seventeen millions for the same number of dollars. If I buy Soviet rubles, I receive 850,000 for a dollar; but if I buy dollars I pay 1,700,000 Soviet rubles. With such high prices, such small pay, and such confusion in money matters I wonder how people live at all. But they do live and walk about, and seem to get along. I give it up.

Between Petrovsk and Grozni, Monday night, March 6.—Our train pulled out of Baku a little after eight last night, and by morning we had not made much headway. During a good part of the day we were in sight of the quiet, grayish Caspian, in which not a boat of any kind could be seen. The country about us was flat and swampy; but as we proceeded northward low hills appeared on the west, and toward evening these were covered with snow. Most of the villages passed were of adobe and in a poor state. We saw flocks of sheep of a small size, more than half of them black and brown. The population is mostly Moslem, judging from the dress of the women and the mosques that loom up from time to time. Derbent looks quite ancient, and remains of its former walls and forts show even from the car. Many people are hanging on to the steps and buffers of our train, but still more are on the roofs of the cars of trains going south, in search of food.

At Petrovsk the officials discovered that our papers were not in order, but allowed us to go on. Soon after leaving this station we ran into rainy weather, which we prefer to cold because we have so little fuel. Neither at Baku, nor at Derbent, nor at Petrovsk were we able to obtain wood or coal. A man on his way from Moscow to Tiflis came into our car at Petrovsk and painted a rather gloomy picture of conditions in Russia and

in the capital. He warned us to be on the lookout for a gang of bandits who held up a train the other night and stripped all the passengers. This is one experience we have not yet had in Russia. We may perhaps have it tonight.

March 7.—Nothing happened last night and the great adventure still awaits us. We are passing through a beautiful rolling prairie covered with dew-bedecked, pinkish crocuses, glistening in the morning sun. It is lovely outside, and the eye wanders from the attractive white-washed villages to the antics of the frisking lambs and to the towering snow-covered mountains. Nature is full of joy, harmony, and peace, but man struts about with an aching heart and troubled brain. The conductor who has just been in says that life to the workman is one long nightmare. Bread in Rostov is 100,000 a pound, equal to about one month's salary. He served three years in the Red Army, is a Red, became a Red because of the injustices of the old régime. He and his four brothers lived with their peasant father on three desiatins of land, quite inadequate for their needs, while close to them were landlords with immense estates. For the breakdown of the Soviet government, he blames the Germans who invaded the Ukraine. Had it not been for the Germans, the Soviet would have gained control of Russia before any important opposition could have developed. For the breakdown of the economic life, he blames the bourgeoisie, who ran away and refused to co-operate with the workmen. When I pointed out to him that during the first two years of the revolution the workmen were difficult to get along with, he admitted that there was something to be said on that question. He claims that the Soviet experiment has broken down and he sees salvation for Russia only through foreign capital, and is certain that it has nothing to fear from the Russian workman, who has learned his lesson. The conditions which he proposes for foreign capital are the same as those suggested by the Soviet leaders, i.e., industry to be managed by capital, government, and labor. He thinks that the scheme is practicable.

Station Tikhoretskaia, Wednesday, March 8.—As we pro-

ceed northward the crowds of refugees who are trying to get on the train increase, and last night at different places an attempt was made to rush our car. At one station a company of soldiers tried it and would have succeeded had not the commanding officer persuaded them to wait for another train. At Tikhoret-skaia we arrived about nine-thirty, too late to catch the regular Novorossisk train. This station is a junction point for a number of lines, Tsaritsin, Caucasus, Rostov, and Novorossisk. Hundreds of refugees, from various points of the Volga and other famine districts, are hanging around the station, going here or going there because they have heard that somewhere food may be had. I went among them and they all have the same story to tell: At home there is famine, the grain has been consumed, the horses and cows killed off, the implements sold; and now they are on the way to the Caucasus, Turkestan, or some such place. One party assured me that in Persia bread is two kopeks a pound, while here it is 100,000 rubles. It would have done no good to explain that even were the rumor true, their paper money would not be sufficient to purchase them a meal. These are the kinds of scents these hungry people follow. I asked them what they lived on and they showed me "makukha," the pulp and shells that remain after the oil is pressed out of the sunflower seed. This stuff does not cost very much. Some eat it as it is bought, others who can afford to do so mix it with a bit of flour. Bark is also used as a filler. At night they catch dogs and cats and consume them. Of course many of them are ill, and the officer of the sanitary car at the station, with whom I talked, said that each day several dead are picked up and about thirty are taken to the hospitals; but that little can be done for them, for there is no food.

While I was talking to these people, an American Relief Administration corn train pulled out for the Volga. It was well guarded and the refugees were warned by the soldiers not to attempt to board it. These refugees sometimes cut holes in the sides or the bottom of the cars to get at the contents. Notwithstanding the warning, a number made a rush for the buffers,

but the rifle shots scared off the more timid. On the whole, it seemed to me that the train was well protected. One man asked why America helped, and when I said that it was from purely humanitarian motives, he remarked, "Of course, we will pay you back as soon as we can." During the last few days I had heard that the food trains never reached their destinations, and I therefore put the question to the people with whom I talked. They shrugged their shoulders, "It goes; but will it arrive? And when it does arrive, what good will it do? The government will take it in hand; there will be much writing and talking; and when finally a few pounds of seed are given out, it will be too late for sowing." I know that this is not true. But it is this lack of confidence and hope, this belief that the situation is growing worse, that nothing in Russia can save it, that makes the Russian problem so difficult. The only thing that seems to put courage and fight into these downhearted people is the thought that foreigners are coming to their rescue.

One of the station officials just came in to see us. He said that in parts of the Kuban where the "Zeleni" (remnants of the White armies) are still in force, bread may yet be found, for the Reds do not dare to requisition. From there and from parts of the Caucasus some seed may be expected, but, on the whole, there will be little seeding this spring. He complains about his own problem. Though holding a high position, he has little authority because he is not a Communist and the Communists under him refuse to carry out his orders and occasionally lock him up. Pay is low, irregular, and inadequate. "How can one be efficient under these conditions?"

March 9.—During the last twenty-four hours we have had some more illustrations of the chaotic condition of the Russian railway system. When we reached Tikhoretskaia yesterday, we made inquiries from the station agent on duty as to trains. He told us that an empty freight would start for Novorossisk in an hour and a half—at about eleven o'clock; that it would arrive at Ekaterinodar at seven in the evening, would leave at eight o'clock for Novorossisk, and would arrive there in the

course of the night. He said, also, that a direct train from Novorossisk to Rostov would leave the first-named place on Friday night and not before. Here is what actually happened. We left Tikhoretskaia at one o'clock and reached Ekaterinodar at nine. There the station agent informed us that the next train for Novorossisk would go at two in the morning and arrive at noon the next day. At eleven o'clock a locomotive backed up against our car and with a dozen empties started at breakneck speed for Novorossisk, bringing us there toward six in the morning. We went to the station agent and learned that the next train for Rostov is scheduled for one-forty today. Our car is attached and we are on it.

During the four weeks that we have been away, prices in Novorossisk have jumped several hundred per cent. Speculators are doing a flourishing business at the expense of the poverty-stricken population. "Where is it all leading to? How is it going to end?" are the questions which everyone asks, but which no one answers.

Spring is here in full glory. The trees are budding, lilac bushes leafing, girls buttercupping, and boys fishing. The fields are fertile and inviting, but we see few farmers at work. The winter wheat looks promising.

Rostov-on-the-Don, March 10.—Our train pulled into this station at ten o'clock, just about a quarter of an hour before the Moscow train was due to pull out. We made an attempt to have our car attached, but failed. After the usual difficulties, it was arranged that it should go tomorrow. Jim Hodgson of the American Relief Administration took us up town, and on the way our attention was called to the following poster: "Lice and socialism have nothing in common; therefore, keep clean."

Rostov, like Saratov, made plans before 1914 to become an up-to-date city with broad streets, parks, and office buildings, but the war and the revolution spoiled these plans. Its appearance brings to mind a tree struck by lightning and slowly withering—bark peeling, leaves falling, and branches drooping. Rostov streets are mudholes, its houses broken, and its windows

and doors smashed. There is very little repair work going on and hardly any new construction. The minor improvements that are made from time to time do not bear any relation to the steady destruction. Stores are open, some selling the newly imported dry goods from abroad, others the silver and clothing of the formerly well-to-do, and still others the choicest of foods and luxuries for the use of the Red rich. In front of these gastronomic palaces, one sees bundles of rags, from which issue pitiful cries: "Help a starving orphan, for God's sake." In turning away from this sight one runs into cadaverous human beings with outstretched bony hands and beseeching voices, begging for bread in the name of Christ.

In this city as well as in the cities in the famine area the markets are full of food, but the prices are maddening. Meat which we bought in November for four thousand now costs two hundred thousand rubles a pound; bread has gone up from four thousand to one hundred thirty thousand the pound; eggs are ninety thousand apiece, and potatoes are fifty thousand a pound. The rise in wages is so far below the rise in prices that there is no longer any comparison. The thousands of rubles a month in pay that the hundreds of employed receive mean as little to them as to the millions of unemployed and starving who receive nothing at all. In present-day Russia three classes of people have enough to eat—the thieves, the grafters, and the speculators; and they usually work together.

March 11.—In the *Rostov Sovetskii Iug* of this morning there is a long article on the way organized bands are robbing the freight yards and selling their loot to the wholesale speculators, who in turn bribe the station agents to expedite their stolen goods to the market. The paper says that cars are broken into, are switched on sidings where they have no protection, are missent, are derailed; and the writer strongly hints that there is an understanding between the railway men and the bandits of whom so much is heard. The stolen goods, mostly food, belong, at least in great part, either to the State or to co-operative societies. But that is not all. That portion of the loot which

is left by the railway men and their pals and which eventually finds its way into the government storehouses, is in part stolen by the employees there and again passed on to the retail speculators. What about the railway men? One of them said last night that in December he received one pud of flour and six hundred thousand rubles, and since then he has had neither flour nor rubles. Other State employees tell similar stories. This stealing, speculating, and grafting explains how a certain portion of the population lives, but it does not account for the great mass who cannot steal, speculate, or graft. How these people manage is yet a mystery, and the fact that so many are still able to be about is a credit to the physical endurance of the human race.

The Moscow papers of March 5 are filled with tragic stories of hunger, deprivation, and general demoralization. Parts of Russia are returning not only to a primitive but to an animal state. Decency, self-respect, cleanliness, and the finer feelings for which the human race has fought for so long are disappearing and the purely animal instincts are reasserting themselves. In daytime human beings fight with dogs over the garbage piles or work in gangs making raids on the food markets, and at night prowl around like beasts looking for prey. After a certain hour of the night it is not safe to be out alone in any of the large cities. Little care is given to the sick and dying, who, like wounded animals, crawl off into some hole to die; when the decomposed bodies are discovered they are cast into a pit. With scenes like these before them, educated and intelligent Russians are struggling with all their might against the fate which they think awaits them unless help comes from somewhere, and they have little hope of that. They are like guests caught at night in a burning hotel, running here and there to find an outlet where none exists. The Soviet will not let them out and foreign governments will not let them in, and so they must lose their reason and die. History has few such tragedies as Russia.

These same Moscow papers, *Izvestiia* and *Pravda*, which weep over the dying proletariat, celebrate the third anniversary

of the Third International and speak of the blessings which that world event has brought to the workmen in general and to the Russian in particular. It is the cursed bourgeoisie that is to blame for the ills of the world, and for Russia's ills in particular. "We Communists will set the world to rights."

Between Voronezh and Moscow, March 12.—For more than an hour before the train started yesterday a long line of passengers stood waiting to get on, most of whom, though they bought tickets, had no chance. When the cars were opened and the militia took its posts to check the rush of passengers, there began the usual shrieking and pushing. Those in the rear, realizing that there was little hope for them inside the car, made for bumpers, roofs, and places under the cars. They were chased from these places, but as soon as the police turned their backs the refugees and bagmen were on again. Even when the train started it was stopped for the police to pull off the hangers-on, but most of them got on again. We have more passengers outside and under the car than inside. Today at Voronezh I saw a number of people trying to steal a ride on the locomotive and the tender. The fireman ordered them off, and when they refused he went among them, threw off their caps and bags, and forced them to leave. They waited until the engine started and the fireman was occupied, and then got on again.

For two or three hours after leaving Rostov we followed the river, which is just beginning to break up. It was pleasant outside, the snow was thawing fast, and in some places it was nearly all gone. Late in the afternoon we ran into colder weather and snow-covered ground. At the stations, women with milk pots offered their wares for sale, and at one place I saw a man exchange needles for food.

In the morning there came on board two "political controllers" to examine our passports. Later in the day, at Voronezh, there came into the car two other controllers, and after looking at our papers they asked to be allowed to inspect the car, which permission we gave them. In their search they found two puds of butter which our two porters said they had bought "to take

to their families," but the controllers said for "speculative purposes." They demanded that the porters either pay a fine of five hundred thousand rubles or forfeit the butter. The porters decided to pay the fine on condition that a receipt be given to them. The controllers grabbed the money and hurried off to get the receipt, but while they were gone the train pulled out. Before night we will probably have at least one more controller, this time a military one, who will look for deserters and will ask for something else.

At Voronezh I bought a copy of the local paper, *Voronezhskaia Kommuna*, and was interested to note how cleverly the Communists still carry on their propaganda. Today is celebrated the fifth anniversary of the March revolution and this is made a special occasion to arouse Bolo enthusiasm. In the Narodny Dom, tonight at seven o'clock, Nicholas Romanov, Alexandra Fedorovna, Protopopov, and Scheglovitov are to be tried. As witnesses are called the following: workman, soldier, Cossack, sailor, Jew, Ukrainian peasant, woman servant, landholder, manufacturer, and priest. All members of the Red Army in Voronezh are invited. In the Dvoretz Truda, Alexander Kerenski is to be tried and as witnesses are summoned cadet-manufacturer, Menshevik, Social-revolutionist, officer, workman from Petrograd, soldier from the front, German-Spartacus, village-poverty peasant, and member of Woman's Battalion. To this trial are invited all the men and women workers who belong to the trade unions. It would be interesting to attend these trials, but one can picture the scene and hear the speeches without straining the imagination.

The Moscow as well as the local papers are arousing public opinion in favor of seizing the gold and silver of the churches.

En route, between Riazan and Moscow, March 13.—Many weeks ago a Communist told me that his party had decided to abandon the leaflet, pamphlet, "long live the proletariat" method of propaganda, and to make use of more artistic forms—the love-story, the drama, and other indirect ways of getting their teaching to the masses. The trial of Nicholas Romanov

and Alexander Kerenski in Voronezh yesterday is, probably, the working out of the new ideas. Today I read in the Moscow *Pravda* of March 8 an article by a Bolo who complained that the Communists are not doing enough propaganda and that the tide is running against them. He pointed out that in the Moscow show places such representations are given as *Trilby*, *King Dagobert*, and *Napoleon*, in which bourgeois ideology is set before the proletarian public, which applauds it especially now when there is so much talk about the New Economic Policy. He appealed to the Party to strengthen the Proletcult, the institution for the spreading of propaganda, to make a special effort to stop this slide toward bourgeoisism by either going in strong for new plays that will counteract the bourgeois influence or putting on some of the better plays of the old repertoire that have no capitalistic significance. Following his article there were notices in the paper that of the fourteen Proletcults in the Moscow government four only are left, and that other such institutions have had their budgets reduced.

We expect to arrive late in the afternoon or early in the evening. Three of the railway officials came into our car and we asked them to have a cup of tea. They remained for a considerable time and we had quite a talk.

During the last two or three years a number of popular legends have arisen in regard to the Emperor and the church, and our visitors told us the following one: When the Bolos seized the Troitsky-Sergeivsky Monastery, a guard was put in. About midnight the church bell began to ring and the startled guard shouted up the belfry to know what scoundrel was making the noise. When no reply came, one of the soldiers said, "I will go up and throw that d—n fool down head foremost." He started up and in a few minutes returned, head first. Another soldier gave a mighty oath and climbed up the ladder to cut the throat of the intruder; and this second soldier, too, came down with his throat cut. A third and a fourth did the same thing, and each came down, having died in the manner in which he had threatened to kill the ringer of the bell. At last one

soldier said he would go up without any arms or threats, and, crossing himself, climbed up. When he came to the belfry, he saw an old man with a white beard, who asked him why he had come and whether he, too, had murder in his heart. The soldier answered, "No." The old man took him by the hand and led him where he could see a conflagration of cities and villages. From this scene he led him to another where war was going on, where one Russian massacred another; to a third scene of parched fields, hunger, pestilence; and to a fourth of human beings reverting to savagery and idolatry. After showing him all this, the old man said, "This is the fate of Russia under the Bolsheviks. Go and tell them to desist." The soldier climbed down and told his fellows what he had seen.

One of the visitors insisted that never before has Russia been so demoralized, never before have there been so many men without principles, men who fear neither God nor the devil, who have no sense of honor, who hesitate not to commit perjury or any other dishonest act. The others, though they agreed that moral conditions are bad, were yet unwilling to accept the inference of the first speaker that the Bolos were entirely responsible for this state of affairs. They pointed out that, at least so far as the peasants were concerned, demoralization had begun even in the Tsar's time, the old régime having prepared the soil for the Bolos. Religion was losing its hold in the time of Nicholas and had little influence even then. On the other hand, they said that there is now a real awakening of the masses, that more people are doing sound thinking than formerly, and that great good is bound to come out of all this misery in the future.

The question of war and peace was discussed. Everyone had some bit of news to report, pointing to war preparations, but no one could see a good reason for war. Nevertheless, all were apprehensive. All present commented on the seriousness of the economic situation and wondered how Russia would work her way out of the terrible condition that confronted her.

Reached Moscow today, March 13, 5:30 P.M.

VIII

SOUTH RUSSIA

(AUGUST 29—SEPTEMBER 10, 1922)

Kiev, August 29, 1922.—Three days ago Fisher and I started out on a tour of investigation and inspection. During the last six months the sanitary conditions and train service have improved so much that we are glad to do without special cars and take pot luck with the other passengers in the smelly coaches. Soon after the train pulled out, four or five men, half of them heavily armed, came around to see our ticket and verify our "documents." Our ticket was a bit muddled. At the top it said good for "two" passengers, and at the bottom it read for "one" passenger. The ticket-collector, not knowing what to do, took it to the member of the Cheka and explained that the two "gentlemen" were not to blame for the mistake. The Chekist jumped on him: "Gentlemen! They are no more gentlemen than you and I; they are tovarischs." The same gang came around later to close the window and warn us of thieves. We told them that it was too hot to close the window entirely. "In that case," said the Chekist, "I will put a guard to watch your window." We thanked him, and he went off and forgot all about it. We, however, could not ignore the possibility of thievery. Within the last three months McSweeney, Bogen, and Rosen had lost their clothes while traveling over this line. We therefore concluded to keep ours on. We tried to go to sleep, but this was difficult because of a warm discussion in the hallway between a non-Communist *spets* [expert] and a Communist. The "non" complained of the harsh treatment he had been receiving, and the "Com" replied by developing the question of the relation between the "non" and the "Com" historically. He said that in the beginning the Bolos did not wish to assume power but were forced to it by circumstances, by the need of establishing order. They had hoped that the non-

Communists would co-operate with them, but instead of doing so the "non" sabotaged; and in self-defense the Communists turned on them, drove them from the offices and factories, and put incompetent but loyal workmen in their places. After six months of hunger the intelligentsia asked to be taken back in service, but the workmen repudiated them as slackers until the government stood up for them. The same thing happened in the army. When the old officers offered to come back the government turned the stream of propaganda to flow in favor of these men.

This is a very interesting argument and has much truth in it. It is, however, hard to believe that the Bolsheviks were so naïve as to expect that the people whom they dispossessed of all power and all property would submit tamely and take orders from them.

Next morning, Sunday, we reached Briansk, and tarried there about two hours. There were many refugees, among them a group of Siberians from Tomsk, who had left their homes over a year ago. One man had been seven months on the way; another, ten, and in the course of that time had lost his wife and four children. According to the recent decrees these people are obliged to return to their homes, but there is no transportation for them. They vagabond from place to place, and the local peasants, knowing the helplessness of these unfortunates, exploit them by paying them very little for labor.

While we were talking, there walked up to us a man from Briansk with a letter from a friend in Chicago promising him a food parcel which he has not yet received. I inquired about the crop. "The crop," he said, "is not very good; but it is fair and we can get along on it if *they* do not take too much tax."

I left this group and wandered off to another part of the station where I saw a picturesque, long-bearded, barefooted patriarch dressed in his winter coat basking in the sun. I greeted him and offered him a "Fatima." He would not smoke, but would talk. He lives not far from Moscow and over a year ago he and his family came south in search of work and food;

he is now returning home with ten puds of grain which he hopes to put in this fall if he can get there in time for the operation. He too has been ordered home, and he too is without the necessary transportation, except a piece of paper which is not honored. He said that the feeling of the Ukrainian toward the Russian is quite hostile. "You have made the revolution," say the Ukrainians to the Russians; "go and live in it and don't come to us." This hostility has greatly increased in the last year or two, because of the thousands of refugees, because of the tax and the Communists and the Russian soldiers stationed here, who collect it. This year the tax, said the patriarch, is heavier than before and the hostility is consequently greater. A Russian can get no shelter and no help in the Ukrainian village.

In Soviet good time we started once more. When we had gone for an hour one of the brakemen came to us asking that we change a 100-million-ruble note for him. He and two others had received this in payment for a month's service and have been carrying it around for several days without being able to change it. "We have money, but no bread." Toward evening we bought a tough roast chicken for $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions, bread for $\frac{1}{2}$ million, and with the hot water which the porter gave us we had tea and he the chicken. Before retiring we barricaded the door, fixed the window, took off our clothes, put them under the pillow, and so saved them.

Kiev, August 30.—Yesterday I called on a number of people whom I met when I was here last. They reported that recently some twenty-five intellectuals have been arrested, among them being members of the Russian Medical faculty and leaders of the Ukrainian National Church. In Kharkov the teachers of the polytechnical school were the worst hit by the arrests.

The people of Kiev are very grateful for the American help, both direct and indirect. American food has forced the speculators to reduce the price of the necessities of life. One speaker summarized the attitude of the man on the street toward America by saying: "The average Russian in the Ukraine when he speaks of help from abroad thinks of America."



Top: *The Kunzakh guard*
Bottom: *Dagestan mountaineers
at home*

Top: *Mr. and Mrs. Abdulah*
Bottom: *Red officers at Gunib*

This morning I took a walk through the town, and it looked very prosperous indeed. Street improvements are going on, stores have plenty of new goods, and an abundance of food—but it is not cheap. There are bitter complaints against the heavy, irregular, and indefinite taxation. In some respects life is returning to the primitive system of the Chinese. The fire department, before it puts out the conflagration, bargains with the owner of the house as to payment; the police, before they undertake to recover stolen goods, demand a share of the property.

Yesterday being a special church holiday, Fisher and I, true pious people that we are, went to the famous Kiev Monastery. Before the war, pilgrims from all parts of Russia came here for the occasion, but now people from afar no longer come. The monastery yard was crowded with all types of peasants, some in their national costumes. There was one of the finest collections of beggars that I have ever seen, and they did a thriving business. Pilgrims in small groups sat in different parts of the yard resting and lunching on black bread and cucumbers and talking of the good old days. It was probably just like this five hundred years ago, and there is little to indicate that mentally the people have made much progress during that interval. The Communists make a great mistake in thinking they can by a scribble of the pen abolish the church. To the Russian peasant of today the church is a social and religious center and Bolshevik decrees on that subject mean no more to him than the fly that lights on his nose when he falls asleep on the street.

Odessa, August 31.—We left Kiev yesterday morning in a clean Russian second-class car with a coupé to ourselves, which was much to be preferred to the dirty International wagon-lit from Moscow to Kiev. We had a beautiful day and a delightful ride through a fertile and fairly well-cultivated country. Fields were being made ready for fall planting and some were already seeded. At every station we were offered food, but the price asked was rather high. Wheat was selling for four and five millions the pud, and rye, for a million or so less, which is

higher than on the Volga, owing probably to the greater competition here. For in addition to the State, the ordinary speculators, there are buyers from Poland and from the Black Sea. People with whom we talked informed us that the contraband trade between Poland and this part of Russia is considerable, and that the Polish goods are not of a very high quality. Late in the day we noticed at a number of stations long lines of peasant carts waiting their turn to unload the grain tax.

Toward four o'clock a Russian and his wife took a seat in our coupé. They are on their way to a station called Zhmerinka, the center of bandit raids. According to their story, the bandits make their headquarters in the forests near the Polish frontier, some hundred miles away. Our visitors divide these highwaymen into two classes: those that are robbers, pure and simple, and those that have a patriotic idea back of them. The latter are kind to the peasants, who in turn help them in their efforts against the Communists. In the town of Zhmerinka the Communist leaders never pass the night at home, so that in case of a raid, the bandits could not find them. It is similar to the story we used to hear of the Tsar, never sleeping two nights in the same bed. Just now, the bandits are making it a point to raid and destroy the warehouses where the grain tax is collected.

In discussing the general state of the country, they informed us that the crop is not quite so good this year as last, and though the tax is lighter it is still too heavy for the peasant because of its peculiarities. Under the present system, a man's tax is dependent on the number of animals he has. Two men having an equal amount of land and equal crop but an unequal number of horses and cows, pay unequally; the man having the larger number of animals pays a much larger grain tax. The result of this has been to cut down the live stock to a minimum, until now it is reaching what one Russian in Kiev called "the one horse standard."

Industry in this part of the world is picking up and is ahead of what it was a year ago, but that does not necessarily say very much for it. The people who talked to us had little hope of

great improvements until such questions as the right of private property, personal freedom, are definitely settled. They painted a rather gloomy picture of the present situation, and like so many other Russians whom I meet, insisted that life is stronger than the Communists and that it will force Russia back to more normal conditions.

I took up with them the work of the American Relief Administration. They said that wherever there is an American to supervise the distribution of the food, the right people benefit; where there is no American, the government crowd control the distribution toward its own ends. The same story has come to us from other quarters.

Partly because the evening was beautiful and partly because we were afraid of having our clothes stolen, we put off going to bed as long as possible. Finally we had to make the break. In the course of the day we had looked over our fortress and made our plans in case of an attack. When we had driven wedges in the door and windows we went to sleep. Fisher said he woke up in the course of the night thinking he was robbed; I woke up at almost every stop; but, thanks to our vigilance and foresight, we have on our manly garb today.

In the morning, we were aroused by the call of "water-melons, canteloupes"; and just outside of the window, large, delicious melons of all kinds were offered for 100,000 to 300,000 each. Good fresh butter was bought for one million the pound (less than 25 cents), and in the distance meat freshly butchered was sold for a few cents. There was, however, very little bread.

For miles and miles, as far as the eye could see, there was beautiful, rich, black, prairie soil, but no grain field. During the last two years the crops have burned up. The unripened grain of last year is now cut for hay or used for pasture. There is no fall plowing, because there is no seed. The settlers have become so discouraged that they have moved to districts where food is more plentiful or into the larger cities.

The last hundred miles on the way to Odessa recalled last

year's scenes on the Volga. People with sacks on their backs, hanging on to the sides of the train, stealing a ride under the cars and on the roofs. It was a real famine picture. There was also the ever-present speculator buying up food to exchange in the city.

The railroad tracks just before coming into Odessa are full of broken-down cars and engines, one mass of junk that takes up room. The suburbs are in ruins, due to an explosion on August 6, 1918. As we were getting within the city limits, we noticed men, women, and children on both sides of the tracks waiting to receive sacks of potatoes, flour, and onions as they were thrown out of the cars and those in the lineup seemed to know to whom they belonged. Some of the sacks broke and the contents spilled, and in one case a woman who followed her sack also had a spill.

September 2.—Yesterday morning we took another peep at the city and saw more ruins. Odessa is in the midst of a treeless plain, and as fuel is not imported the trees have been cut down and beautiful houses have been broken up for the sake of the few pieces of timber inside. Fisher visited a children's home and found that the floor in one building was being torn out for fuel with which to cook the meals.

Yesterday was a military holiday with a military procession. To add to the excitement a number of flying machines hovered over the Red Army, and one of these machines tumbled down, killing all there were in it and a few little children under it.

At five-thirty yesterday Colonel Grove started on a tour of inspection to the eastward and took us as far as Nikolaev. After following the coast for a time we turned inland and found ourselves on the plains like those of Dakota, except that they have numerous mounds on them all along the way. These beautiful prairies are almost untilled. We passed a number of dried-up cornfields and sunflower patches, but only about one ear of corn in ten had good-sized grain on it. Numerous herds were seen, seemingly in fair condition. For the immediate future this country promises to become once more the home of

shepherds and highwaymen. Banditry is highly developed, and except for the fact that these robbers make it a point to kill Communists and Jews and spare the American Relief Administration stores, they are in nowise to be distinguished from freebooters elsewhere. There is only one recorded case where an American Relief Administration warehouse was robbed. The peasants of the village where the robbery took place had some time before attacked the robber camp and hid some of the loot in the American warehouse. A few days later, the bandits broke into the warehouse and took away as much as had been taken from them.

This morning we had a look at Nikolaev, the one-time naval station and shipbuilding center of this region. It was laid out on modern lines, with broad streets, with rows of trees, and benches between them. All that is left, are the broad streets; the trees and benches have been burned as fuel. The shipyards are idle and the waters near the beach are crowded with vessels that were once seaworthy and are now mere junk. The city is dead, except around the market place where the peasants are selling watermelons and such truck.

We left Nikolaev at three this afternoon accompanied by one of the staff of that post and reached Odessa four hours later.

September 4.—Yesterday morning, Sunday, one of the native district supervisors (an intelligent German), Fisher, and I went to inspect the American Relief Administration work in the German and Russian settlements west of Odessa. The country we passed in the course of the day was like and the crop situation no better than that which exists east of Odessa, but in other respects we found much that was new. The first village we came to was Liebesthal, with a present population of 3,054; on January 1, it numbered 3,584. Its present birth-rate is about one-third of the death-rate, while in the period before the war the annual birth-rate was twice the death-rate.

This group of German villages, about fifteen in number, lies in the valley which slopes from Odessa toward the Dniester. In driving yesterday, we came occasionally to a rising ground

from which we caught a glimpse of several settlements, and had we been able to climb a high mountain we probably could have seen them all. These villages are very much alike: one or two broad streets, long rectangular buildings, one or one and one-half stories high, facing each other. The houses are built of stone or of mud-and-straw bricks, white-washed and roofed with tiles, straw, or *komish*, a kind of bulrush that grows in the marshes. In normal times the *komish* is used as fuel and roof cover; but in these days of hunger, the cattle and horses are driven into it while it is tender and given the choice of eating it or dying. We went into several of the houses and found them not unlike the sitting-rooms of many of the small farm-houses in our West.

These German villages are much more prosperous looking and more progressive than those on the Volga. One of the pastors explained the difference by the fact that the German colonies on the Black Sea practice the system of private land ownership, while those on the Volga have communal ownership. There are probably other reasons, but this one plays its part undoubtedly. It is an interesting question for study. The two groups came to Russia at about the same time from the same German states, with the same amount and kind of cultural baggage, and yet in the course of one hundred and fifty years they show marked differences. The Volga Germans look so much like the Russians that it is difficult to tell them apart, while the Black Sea Germans have retained to a great extent their peculiarly German physical characteristics and cultural traits. We stopped at the home of one of the men connected with the American Relief Administration kitchens, an intelligent and honest German. Our people trust him, but the Soviet officials for reasons of their own do not, and they have brought about a situation which will compel the American Relief Administration to remove him from his position. A few days ago he was summoned before the revolutionary tribunal and charged with failing to pay five pounds of flour toward the "relief of the hungry." This tax is collected whenever the officials desire; no

one but themselves can tell what becomes of it. Our man swears that he knew nothing of the tax, and has never been asked to pay it, but all this defense helped him not. He was fined 100 millions and pronounced unfit to hold any position of trust. The punishment is so out of proportion to the offense that it is in itself a proof that the case was made up with a special purpose in view.

The family of this man comprises three persons—father, mother, and daughter. They are not farmers, yet they are obliged to pay something like six and one-half puds of different kinds of grain as their share of the *prodnalog* or tax, which grain they have to buy. We came across other cases of that kind yesterday as well as the case of a man whose crop was corn but who had to pay wheat. At the same time we learned of farmers who have had no crop and have paid nothing at all. All these differences are explainable if we keep constantly in mind that the interpretations of the laws are left to the local authorities. During the period of requisition the peasants stopped planting on the theory of "what's the use?" Last year the government changed the system to a definite tax in the hope of encouraging the peasant to greater efforts, but he has not come up to expectations. This year, each family was allotted a certain area, depending on the number of "souls," and the tax was collected on the allotment and on the number of souls regardless of the crop. In addition to the *prodnalog* there is a monthly tax for the salary of the officials, a hunger tax, and other taxes and requisitions for the support of the *komnezamozh* [committee of the helpless]. However, if a man belongs to the *komnezamozh* and has no crop, he is not obliged to pay any taxes. The *komnezamozh*, as already indicated, is found in every village in the Ukraine and is made up of the poorest and most shiftless elements. With the aid of the chairman of the *selispolkom* (village executive commander) it lords over the *kulak* and the *sredne*, or the rich and the well-to-do peasant, and in this manner the whole community has been brought down to a low level. In many villages the sons of the formerly

well-to-do peasants have joined the rabble and the demoralized and have become leaders of the *komnezamozh*. The same situation existed in Russia where the committee was known as *bednota*; it had the same demoralizing effect and was abandoned, as it will be here.

For administrative purposes each village is called upon to select a committee, usually twelve, to form a *selispolkom*. Theoretically, the community has the right to select whom it pleases as the chairman of the *selispolkom*, but in practice the powers that be suggest the candidate, often an outsider, and if the election falls on some other person, he is either not recognized or arrested on some charge. In Friedenthal the chairman is either a Lett or a Jew; the inhabitants are not sure of his genealogy for he does not belong to them. A member of the *selispolkom* admitted that he and his colleagues were afraid to oppose the chairman, and that no one desires to go on the committee, for it carries with it humiliation and possibly arrest.

The priest of the Jakobkirche called. He reported that only about one-fourth of the agricultural area was seeded last year, because there were no seed and no horses. In the spring his village started out with twenty workhorses (before the war it had 2,000), and these twenty were so weak that they had to be pastured a few weeks on the green grass before being harnessed. The planting was consequently late and did not get the start it needed before the great heat came on. In the course of the next two months the village will be again in the midst of a famine worse than the last, for there is nothing more to sell. In Odessa a German association is trying to secure seed, but its means are limited. What he said of his village is more or less true of the other villages we visited. Wilhelmthal, with a population of 1,080, had thirty-one horses in the spring (half of which were fit for work), and in the course of the summer a few more were added by purchase. The fifteen villages in this group have a population of 22,000. Of 27,000 *desiatins* of land about 8,000 were put into seed. They paid a *prodna*log of 33,900 puds grain.

The priest commented on the general demoralization in the village, and we fully appreciated his sentiments when he complained that during last night thieves got into his cellar and took everything, even his Sunday dinner.

From Liebesthal we motored across the prairies and through corn and sunflower fields to the village of Petersthal, a Catholic community. We halted at the home of one of the inhabitants to deliver 3,200 German marks, for which his brother in Canada had paid fourteen dollars several months ago. The letter was long in coming, and yesterday these marks were worth just about three dollars. There is no regular bank or official rate of exchange, and by the time he turns these marks into rubles, he will get the equivalent of a dollar or two.

Our host had been a prosperous farmer before the war and a highly respected citizen. He told us that he is still better off than his neighbors because in spite of all the efforts of the local government to crush him, he and his boys had managed to save the horses, even after the komnezamozh took his straw pile from him. This year his operations included:

Crop	Planted (puds)	Harvested (puds)
Corn	9	80*
Barley	1	40
Wheat	2	80
Oats	3	120
Beans	.5	18
Total	15.5	338

* Much corn was stolen in the field.

His prodnalog amounts to twenty-six puds of grain, but as it is not the kind he raises, he must sell what he has to buy it. He admits that the tax is not heavy and that if he should be left in possession of what he has, he could pull through the winter.

We sent for one Krause, a former school-teacher and a member of the American Relief Administration kitchen committee.

Krause informed us that he is no longer a member, for he and one or two others have been deposed by the chairman of the selispolkom, and members of the komnezamozh put in their places, and that these men are now running the kitchen. "Are they running it honestly?" we inquired. "We cannot make any charges, but we do know that for months the children have had neither sugar nor fats." "Why did you not report this to me?" asked our inspector. "Report to you! I have already been locked up three times and I do not wish to be locked up again and leave my family to starve. If we say a word, if we make a move, we are pounced upon. When you asked for me just now, I hesitated whether I should come, and I am not at all sure that it will not lead me into trouble." Our inspector realized the justice of the remark and in order not to compromise him and the others in the house, he sent for the chairman of the selispolkom. While waiting for him we learned that the death-rate of the village was three times the birth-rate, that whole families have been wiped out, that the American Relief Administration has saved hundreds of lives, that the village has food for about two months, and that the famine this year will be worse than last because there is nothing left to sell. In 1919 the number of horses was 600; the number is now 60, and not a stallion among them. There are some 250 cows and 2 bulls. There is no seed for fall planting. As to schools and cultural life, people do not think about them; their thoughts are set upon one object—food.

At this stage of the conversation there came a knock at the door and there stepped in a very slick-looking young man. He was dressed in a factory-made shirt, open at the throat, a Prince Albert, striped trousers that go with it, no vest, and shoes that were once patent leather. "You sent for me?" he inquired with an air of indifference, as if to say, "What can there be in common between you and me!" The inspector told him that we were here to look into the affairs of the American Relief Administration and therefore had sent for Krause, but on learning that he was no longer a member of the kitchen committee

we desired to see the chairman. "The chairman is out of town and I am his secretary. Perhaps I can tell you what you wish to know."

"How is the crop this year, and how much food is there for the winter?" we asked.

"There is food enough for two months, and after that there will be hunger."

"Have you any recommendations about the American Relief Administration feeding for this coming year?"

"We plan that the American Relief Administration should feed about fifty per cent or less of the number it did until now."

"How would you select the children?"

"The committee would begin—" Here he was interrupted by one of us asking the question whether he is a member of the committee. "Not yet," he replied, "but I expect to be."

"Please go on with your method of selection."

"As I said already the committee would begin by taking in immediately all the children of the komnezamozh, 104 in number, and add other children if there should be vacancies."

"But is not the committee supposed to select the children according to need and not according to social classes?"

"Yes, that is true, and that is the reason we take the komnezamozh, because the members of it are the most needy."

"Is the government going to do anything to help with the seeding this fall?"

"We have asked for 880 puds of seed grain and we may get it."

"You have not enough horses to seed so much?"

"No, we have not. The seed will be distributed among the poorest families and some of it will undoubtedly be used as food."

The komnezamozh gang is putting itself on the American Relief Administration kitchen committee to distribute its food; it puts its own children on the list, and the rest can starve. It calls for seed grain which will be distributed not among those who are willing to work and plant, but among those who are

too lazy. After they have consumed the American Relief Administration stores and the government seed, they will take from the few that have saved. It looks like a vicious circle; and were it not for the fact that the laws of life and justice prevail, Russia would be totally annihilated, for in the end, one faction of the *komnezamozh* would be consuming the other. The viciousness of the system has become apparent, and, as I said before, the *komnezamozh* is gradually losing its power.

When we pulled out of this village and our slick young man took leave of us, Fisher said a few things that are not printable. However, we forgot the man as we sped through this beautiful prairie country. Our enthusiasm reached its high point when we came to the top of a hillock from where we had a view of the Black Sea Liman, the river Dniester flowing into it, the stretches of marshes that in the summertime keep the Rumanian and Russian soldiers from fighting or trading (I do not know which), the town of Maiaki, the Odessa waterworks, and the village of Belaiefka. We drove hastily through Maiaki, a town that figured prominently on the old Russian maps, as a trading center, but now looks no better than the other villages that surround it. About two o'clock in the afternoon we came to Belaiefka and stopped in front of the *volispolkom* [volost executive committee]. The chairman, who may have been a peasant but did not look it, was on hand and invited us into his office. We suggested that we talk in front of all, but he insisted that we should come inside. It mattered little to us, for we were far more anxious to hear him than to talk. He was assisted by a young man, who surely was not a peasant and who seemed quite eager to furnish us with information, but never of the right sort. Before we were through, we learned that the volost has a population of 17,000, of whom 13,000 are in great need; that they cannot support themselves by fishing, because the right to cast nets belongs to the 51st Division of the Red Army, which has leased it to a private company.

We drove on, passing carts drawn by two cows, and even by one cow—an indication of great poverty. The only signs of

prosperity in this region were the vineyards of luscious grapes. We looked and lusted, and at the first opportunity we bought.

Toward four-thirty we came to a group of villages, the original settlers of which, judging by the names, came from the Rhine Valley. We called on Pastor Steimer, a delightful old scholar, who has traveled a great deal, has read and studied much, and has written one or two books on literature. He had saved and collected material for his great work, the history of the German settlements; but soon after the revolution these documents were taken from him by the local Communists and burned for fuel; but the saintly old man and his dear old wife have no bitterness in their hearts. They are too much occupied with the everyday work of caring for the poor parishioners to think of those who have harmed them. He told us that in his village 153 have died and 52 have been born since January 1922, and that hundreds of others would have died had not the American Relief Administration helped. He named the several villages in the neighborhood that have between them 20,000 desiatins of land, 100 horses (not one stallion), several hundred cows and calves, and 2 or 3 bulls, hardly any pigs, and almost no sheep. Before the war these villages received from Poland lumber which they made into wagons and farm tools; but that is no longer possible. The crop this year will barely last a month or two, and for next year the prospects are discouraging, for there are no seed and no work animals. One of the reasons why the crop this year is so poor is the fact that last fall the *komnezamozh* agitated for a division of the land until it was too late to seed. This year a more or less permanent distribution of land has taken place, and that is a step forward. The pastor estimated that about sixty per cent of his human flock have wandered astray, but he hopes that some of them may yet come back to the fold. One of the causes of demoralization and disease was the quartering of soldiers during the war and the revolution. But the greatest cause of demoralization is the system of government, which encourages the lazy man, the evil-doer, at the expense of the energetic and honest man. Seed is not given to

those who will plant it, but to those who will not work and will consume it in idleness. Wrong-doing if covered with the cloak of komnezamozh, or some such cloth, goes unpunished; while honest men are put in jail. But the good pastor has faith in God and in the cause of righteousness. All he asks for his people is the opportunity to work, the right to the results of their labor, and a little help to give them the start.

In conclusion, the good old father told us a story. "Some time ago," he said, "a Communist came to convert me, and after talking to him for a time I remarked, 'Why do you try to convert me, an old teacher of philosophy, to a system of nonsense?' While we were arguing, there drove by a cart, drawn by an old nag. 'Come, look!' I called; 'here rides a burgui.' A little later there passed by the window a somewhat better-looking cart and horse. 'Come, look,' I said; 'here drives a kulak.' And half an hour later, we heard quite a noise, and looking out we saw a fine carriage with two good horses, and in the carriage sat a Communist with a painted young woman. 'Come quick, look! here goes a proletarian!' The Communist gave a grunt, expectorated on the floor, and left the room in disgust. Since then, he has made no attempt to convert me."

From this village we went to Dusseldorf, and there too called on the village priest, a red-blooded, pipe-smoking, bay-windowed German. He had his flock of 1,800 well in hand and knew also how to make friends with the Communists. In 1921 he lost 49 by death and added 108 by baptism. Since January 1922, he has buried 158 and has baptized 56; and had it not been for the American Relief Administration, he would have lost many more. His village has 120 horses, but no stallions (it had 2,000 horses before the war), about 500 cows and calves, 3 bulls, and 40 pigs (as compared with 2,500 pigs before the war). About thirty per cent of the villagers have enough food to last them a year, and the others enough for varying periods—some are already out. There are more than 100 homeless children in the community. Hunger and suffering have hardened people's hearts, and less mercy and charity is shown to the

afflicted than before. Forty of his families have nothing, cannot pay the prodnalog, and the authorities threaten to evict them from their homes and sell their cows. Whether the threat will be executed or not, the good priest does not know.

From here, we drove straight to Odessa where we arrived about nine o'clock in the evening, official time (or was it sun time? Fisher says it was Soviet time!).

Moscow, September 10.—Strange as it may sound, our trip to the Crimea was stopped by the Turco-Greek war. We had made plans and had received permission to go on a United States destroyer that was in Odessa. We even went on board prepared to be seasick, but word came that the destroyer should not leave because the other destroyers had been ordered to Smyrna. We disembarked, drove to the station, and got on the train going to Moscow. On the way to Moscow we had a look into Russian speculation. Soon after leaving the Black Sea city, watermelons were offered at the price of 100,000 rubles; several hundred miles farther on, the same melons were selling at 2,000,000 rubles, and passengers were trading watermelons for bread.

IX

THE UPPER VOLGA

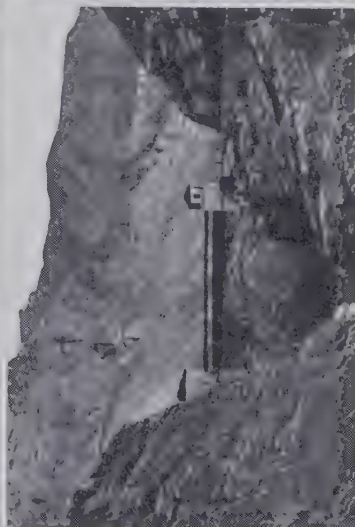
(SEPTEMBER 1922)

Iaroslav, September 1922.—Appeals for help reach the A.R.A. from all parts of Russia. Recently a call came from Iaroslav for food and medical supplies, and I was asked to investigate. Professor Antonov, who heard of my coming, was kind enough to invite me to be his guest. The professor, like other nobles and scholars of his class, lost his estate and other property in the revolution and now he and his wife tease out a living by teaching untold hours under unfavorable conditions. They and their two children live in a small, run-down apartment of two and one-half rooms. They never speak, except in passing and then only jokingly, of their former wealth, and they never complain of their present poverty. They do the best they can and look forward to better times in some distant future.

Iaroslav, one of the oldest of Russian cities, is situated on the banks of the Volga. The more important part of the city is on the south, the higher bank, from which one gets a beautiful view of green fields, autumn forests, white churches with green domes, historic monasteries that once housed distinguished abbots and prelates and now guard political prisoners, women washing clothes, men hauling wood, and, occasionally, pictures of a "September Morn." Iaroslav has been burned down and built up a number of times, the last time in the reign of Catherine, and the architecture of the public buildings is still of the period of that Empress and her grandson Alexander. From the wars and the revolution the city suffered little direct physical damage, and its present shabby look is due almost altogether to lack of repair and upkeep. Though the population has greatly decreased the inhabitants are still crowded, because many of the best buildings have been "commandeered" by the numerous governmental and party organizations, workmen's clubs, offices



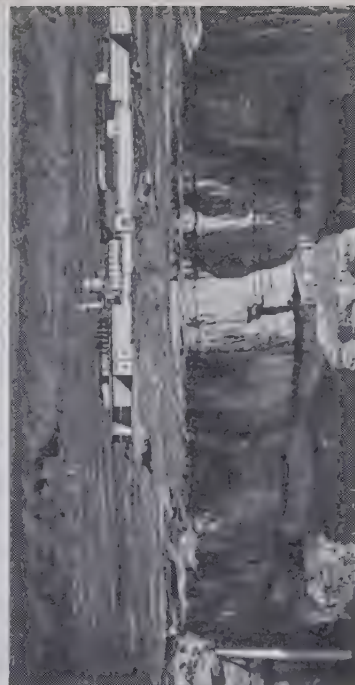
Top: *A native bridge*



Bottom: *Georgievski Bridge, Dagestan*



Top: *Gunib*



Bottom: *Khunzakh Fort*

of the newly founded trusts, etc., and when one building becomes unfit for use, the organization, Indian-like, moves into another and another. The hard times for the city were the years of 1918 and 1919, when buying and selling were declared illegal and food was scarce. It was the period of rabbit-keeping, followed by that of goat-herding; and today these four-legged, bearded Bolsheviks, who do not recognize the rights of private property, march up and down the main streets eating everything within reach, especially the bark of shrubs and trees. The day of the goat is almost over and in some parts of the city one may already see his successor, the pig. Another aftermath of the hungry days is the large public market. This institution has existed in Russia from time immemorial but was closed during the heyday of communism. A year ago the ban was taken off, but by that time there was nothing to sell. Gradually, however, it has come back to its own. First the peasant brought his products, then came those who had a few things to exchange with the peasant, and later the small shopkeeper got up courage enough to open a booth, and in this way the bazaar expanded until it now covers a large square and overflows into the side streets.

In this community there is less hounding of the "burgui," less distrust and more co-operation between them and the Communists than in Moscow and Petrograd. To be sure, every now and then the power of the Communists makes itself felt, but on the whole life here is already beginning to flow in the pre-war channels. I do not know how to explain that. It may be due to the fact that the Iaroslav Communists of today were the Socialist workmen of yesterday and as such were on friendly relations with the local intelligentsia, who protected them from the police and who co-operated with them in the cause of revolution. It may also be due to another circumstance: The Iaroslav Communists, who are real workmen and not intellectuals, realize the destruction and the suffering that the social experiments have caused and consequently become cautious. I was rather impressed by the apologetic tone they assumed for

the deeds of the last three years and the assurance that "now it is different."

THE FACTORY WORKER

In Iaroslav there are important cotton mills, and, interestingly enough, one of them has, with a few interruptions due to lack of fuel, worked its way through the revolution and is now employing many thousands of people. The directors invited me to visit the mill. At the city office I met the government's representative, a young Communist, who looked wise and said nothing; also a director and former manager, who talked diplomatically but told me either what I knew already or what was doubtful. At the factory I was introduced to the directors, or what we should call the superintendent and assistant superintendent—young Communist workmen, representing the employees' union and the government. They took me in charge and guided me through the shops. At the head of the different departments are trained engineers, non-Communists, who, notwithstanding arrests and mistreatment, stood by their posts and saved the works. They are now respected by the repentant workmen and are rendering excellent service.

This is an up-to-date mill, and though it has suffered some hard knocks it is still one of the best cotton factories, not only in Russia but probably in the world, and is today turning out fairly good material. It is not only a mill but also a great social center. What interested me especially was the attitude of the workmen, and I made numerous inquiries on the right and on the left and was told that the "workman works." Labor has learned its bitter lesson and is now thoroughly convinced that the only way to earn the daily bread is by the sweat of the brow. It has had enough of experiments, and, as the Communist guides kept repeating, "it is different now." The time has passed when the workman set for himself his task and his pay; it is now set for him, and if he fails to fulfil the task he is warned once, twice—and the third time he goes. The discipline is stricter now than before the war because it is the union that

lays down the terms, because the supply of labor greatly exceeds the demand, and because the fear of starvation is ever present. Under the present conditions the productivity of labor has reached eighty and in some departments ninety per cent of the pre-war level, but the purchasing power of the employees' pay is less than half of what it was before the war. But the overhead expense is so heavy that even with this small pay the factory runs at a loss. In 1914, labor absorbed twenty-two per cent of the cost of production; and now, including social insurance, it eats up fifty-eight per cent. The factory keeps open simply because it has reserves of raw materials and manufactured goods left by the former management, and because the factory proletariat must be kept on its feet regardless of the cost. The products turned out cannot compete with foreign-made goods and are consequently sold in the Russian market below cost. Just now they are bartered off for food supplies, and thus the factory has filled its warehouse with grain for the coming year.

What I saw and heard in the factory interested me so much that I sought out opportunities to talk over the situation with one of the engineers who had been with the works through the period of storm and stress.

I put the following questions to him:

"Has the Russian workman sobered up—will he work as a workman should?"

"Yes. In our factory, and in others I could name, one can surely count on the steadiness of Russian labor."

"How about the interference of the government and the Communists?"

"In practice the interference is of no importance. Though the Communist stands at the head of the factory, he takes the advice of his experts and co-operates. The workman who was superintendent before the present incumbent, tried to assert his authority, and on the complaint of the engineers and the workmen to the Commissariat of National Economy in Moscow he was removed. If the Communist is an intelligent workman and tries to learn the business he soon discovers what is possible and

not possible and gradually becomes conservative. As superintendent the Communist has the right to a fine house and carriage, and these perquisites as well as his growing conservatism tend to remove him from the workingmen's sphere. Having a representative of the union in authority makes the machine run a bit smoother. Foreign capitalists attach entirely too much importance to this interference."

"How about the interference of the Commissariat of Foreign Trade and its control of export and import?"

"That is a real danger, and foreign capitalists who intend to invest in Russia should reach an understanding on that point. Already a number of Russian organizations have made special agreements with the Commissariat by which they get out from under this control."

"How can foreign capital realize on its investment when labor and social fads are such a large part of the cost of production?"

"That is true. It is not only the cost of labor but also the great waste which causes the loss. But under a different management and under different conditions, even this evil can be cured in time."

"You say this evil can be cured in time. The process of healing is going to be painful and labor may resent the treatment. Your factory will soon reach a point when it can no longer continue, and you will have to apply the medicine yourself; and it may taste less bitter if the workman takes it from your hand than from that of a foreigner. Would it not be better for the foreign capitalist to wait?"

"My friends and I often discuss this point, but we are unable to agree. Personally, I think it would be better for the foreign capitalist to come now, before the crisis, before the wheels of industry stop turning altogether. Our workmen now understand the situation and they are willing to work for bread alone if necessary. If the crisis catches us before foreign help comes we will live through a great period of demoralization; the factories will go to ruin and the workmen to the dogs."

Before concluding this subject attention should be called to another fact. The Russian engineers, who are the brains and the spirit of whatever industry is left in the country, hope eagerly for foreign capital, but not for foreign directing power, that is, as heads of departments. They say that before the war they were treated as children by the German and English managers and engineers. These foreigners did not always know how to get along with the workmen, and this explains some of the bitterness which the workmen felt toward capital. These foreigners escaped and left the Russian engineers, whom they treated as underlings, to bear the burden. It is the Russians who have saved the situation, and they do not intend to be used again as messenger-boys.

THE CITY TEACHER

Being a schoolmaster, loyal to my profession (or is it a trade?), I made some inquiries about the schools. In Iaroslav, as in other parts of Russia that I have visited, the teachers are in a miserable condition. For the period from January 1922 until now (September), the best public-school teachers in this region have received 25 millions in paper rubles, 100 pounds of flour, 10 pounds of salt, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of butter. The government has decreed that no tuition fee shall be charged but has made no provision for the support of the schools. For the coming year the central government has promised to pay the teachers 21 millions monthly; but no one takes this promise seriously, for neither the central nor the local authorities have any money. Under the circumstances, some of the parents have taken upon themselves the support of the instructor. The teacher of one school told me that he has been guaranteed the difference between the sum promised by the government and 70 millions, or in other words, the parents say that they will see to it that he receives 70 millions a month and that they will collect the money by charging each pupil from 3 to 8 millions a month. The terms differ in different schools. Here is the comedy and the tragedy of the situation. Legally and theoretic-

cally the school is free, but everybody knows that it is not; and should a child be excluded because it cannot pay, the teacher will be arrested and locked up for breaking the law of the land. With the hard times ahead and the underhanded system of remuneration it is not likely that the teacher will receive his pay either regularly or in full. As in the years immediately preceding, the teachers will speculate, take in sewing and mending, sell saccharine, home-made shoes, and other things in the "teachers' corner" of the bazaar. Some will give private lessons in the winter months when the schools close for lack of fuel.

Teachers complain that children, because they are underfed and in poor health, are harder to teach than before and that the work is exhausting. Whenever another opening than teaching offers itself, it is taken, and as a result good teachers are becoming scarcer. From all accounts the children are rather eager for knowledge and make the most of the opportunities.

In one respect the school system of Iaroslav is better than that of Moscow. In Iaroslav the schools are open to all alike, without distinction as to social status, just as before the war. Neither are teachers differentiated because of political color. In reply to my question whether or not the government tries to influence the teacher in his teaching and to tell him what to do, I was told that theoretically the government does but practically it does not. The Communists at the head of the educational bureau are usually uneducated people who are too busy trying to make a living to give much time or thought to the school.

In this connection it is also interesting to note how, regardless of government legislation, life is flowing back into the old channels. The Bolsheviks have abolished the "Gymnasium" and have substituted other names and forms, and yet the children persist in calling their school "Gymnasium" and step by step are falling into the line of the old system.

The English language, which was taught comparatively little before the war, is making great headway, and is taking first place in competition with French and German. Not only in the

schools and institutions of higher learning is it taught, but many mature persons are taking private lessons.

Iaroslav has two institutions of a higher grade of learning. One is a Pedagogical Institute, open to all except daughters of priests and even they can get in by smiling on a Communist and getting his recommendation. That the teaching there is not of a high quality is evident from the fact that whenever it is necessary to cut down the number of teachers the graduates of this institute go first.

The other institution is the University, which is supported in part by the factory and which offers in turn the use of its laboratories and shops. Most of the teachers are in some form or other connected with the factory and make a living there. The pay which the professor receives for his teaching is insignificant; yet these men plod from their homes in the factory district to the University some distance away through rain and mud, night after night, to keep the light of learning alive. Admission is open to all, and among the professors there is not one Communist; this worries them so much that while I was there they appealed to the head of the local government to appoint a member of his party to teach the Soviet Constitution.

THE PEASANT

Late Saturday afternoon, in company with a man of peasant origin, I drove out in a *telega* [cart] to spend Sunday in the country. My companion has an interesting history. As a boy he picked up a smattering of learning, enough to become a school-teacher and a Socialist. He was arrested for revolutionary activities and sent to Siberia. He returned from there in the summer of 1917, was again arrested in 1918, this time by the Bolsheviks, escaped from them and went to Southern Russia, where he fell into the clutches of the Whites, ran away from them and came north, and was locked up by the Reds because he had on him a copy of a Socialist paper. He now works in Iaroslav and goes home week-ends to be with the families of his brother, who died in the war, and his widowed sister, who

lost her man in the same battle. These two families, with numerous children and old relatives, live in a three-room *izba*. We jogged along and bumped along for over two hours, occasionally getting out to give the horse a chance to pull the cart out of the mud, and finally came to the village. We were treated to a samovar of hot tea, fresh black bread, good yellow butter, and a clean but cold floor to lie on. When the other members of the household had crawled on the top of the oven or into the corners of the floor and we two were talking, we had a call from a member of the selispolkom, and with him we conversed many hours. This young man fought through the World War, was caught by the Bolshevik wave and carried into the party and the Red Army, became disgusted with the uncommunitistic behavior of some of the comrades and told them what he thought of them; and for his speech was put out of the party and deprived of all the honors and privileges thereto appertaining. He is now tilling the soil and managing the affairs of his village.

The communities around Iaroslav have not been wholly agricultural in modern times. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the villagers tilled the soil in summer and made nails in winter, and numerous smithies are still to be seen. With the rise of smokestacks in Petrograd, Moscow, and other northern cities, the younger members of the peasant families went to the factory to work for the winter, while the older ones remained at home making nails and raising crops. The revolution, with its nationalization of the materials and instruments of production, brought to a sudden end both the domestic industry and the factory system. Hundreds of semi-proletarians with empty pockets and muddled brains rushed back to the soil to get something to eat; but the village had not enough for its own inhabitants, let alone for these refugees. This accounts for the hunger and the hard times of 1918 and explains the wanderings of the people, sack on back, to the east and to the south in search of food. Traveling usually in parties of fifty or more, headed by the young men dressed in the uniform of Kronstadt sailors,

who were then popular, and after "bumming" their way on the trains, sleeping in box cars and dirty stations, bartering their few belongings, dodging the police in waiting to snatch their sacks, the wanderers returned to their homes with a couple of puds of flour and, very often, with typhus. For though they became experts in eluding the guardians of the decrees, they never learned to escape disease carriers.

In the year 1919 a larger acreage than usual was put under plow, which gave a big crop and ended the hunger. A similar good harvest was gathered in 1920. Iaroslav guberniia, having a large proletarian population, suffered comparatively little from the food requisitions of 1919 and 1920, and it was only in 1921 that it began to feel the burden of taxation. Thanks, however, to a happy combination of rain and sunshine, in just the right proportion, the yield of that season was exceptionally good and the prodnalog, though heavy, was not crushing. This year the climatic conditions were unfavorable and the harvest poor. But it is not the climate alone that is to blame. Agriculture is gradually declining because of lack of farming tools, decrease in live stock and fertilizers, and, most important of all, the present economic system, which offers no inducement to raise a large crop. Farming tools of good Russian make lie in the warehouses of Iaroslav, but the farmers cannot afford to buy them. Horses have been requisitioned until on the average there is less than one horse to each peasant-holding; and the present progressive system of taxation as regards cattle and sheep forces the peasant to keep his barn animals down to a minimum.

In each village visited, I heard complaints against the prodnalog. In one village I secured from the chairman of the village the following figures¹ (p. 236) which I have every reason to believe are correct and representative not only of this village but of hundreds of others in this region:

¹ The Soviet taxation system is very complicated and cannot be discussed here. It varies from place to place and from year to year. A monograph study on this subject is now [1927] being prepared by scholars of Stanford University.

THE RUSSIAN FAMINE

TAXATION OF THE VILLAGE OF "X"

Population, 1922	1,050
Desiatins of arable land.....	435
Yield of rye 1922.....	6,000 puds
Yield of potatoes, oats, hay, etc., in terms of rye..	6,000 puds
Total crop	12,000 puds

TAX

Central government (prodnalog).....	2,500 puds
Volost (township)	14 puds
Selskosovet (village)	50 puds
Village herders	220 puds

Total	2,784 puds
Seed for fall and spring.....	2,500 puds

Total needed for seed and tax.....	5,284 puds
Left for village use (in round numbers), half of which, or 3,350 puds, is rye.....	6,700 puds
Millage (government mills), 3 pounds per pud..	250 puds

Total flour left for the village (3,350 puds, less 250 puds millage), 3,100 puds, or about 3 puds of flour for each of the 1,050 inhabitants for the year.

ADDITIONAL TAXES

Guberniia tax (so-called *Usadbenoi* tax on house and garden):
18 million rubles per home

Other central government tax:

4 pounds butter per cow up to two cows and increasing progressively with the number of cows

Guzhovoi Nalog:

Each able-bodied man and horse to work 6 days a year for the government, generally hauling wood

Obschegrazhdanskoi Nalog:

3,000,000 rubles for each able-bodied woman (from 17 to 50 years of age) and man (from 17 to 60 years of age)

No one is certain that, after all these are paid, the authorities may not call for more, whenever they desire it.

These figures show that after the peasant has paid all his grain tax, which is fifty per cent of this crop, he has for every member of his family six puds, half of which is grain and the other half potatoes, barley, oats, hay, etc. That is not all. The prodnalog has to be hauled to Iaroslav, and as the payments are made in instalments several trips are necessary. The villages I visited are from ten to fifteen miles from the seat of the government, but many others are forty and fifty miles; and anyone who has been in Russia knows the condition of the roads in the autumn. Many villages were named to me where the inhabitants had refused to pay the tax, but to no avail. The heads of the families were rounded up and driven into a barn and there kept until they said "enough." Last year soldiers were quartered on the inhabitants until they paid. So far no very extreme measures have been used. The peasants pay under protest, under arrest, under duress, but they pay nevertheless. They have the choice of either themselves selling the cows or having the Communists sell them.¹ During the week that I spent in Iaroslav and its neighborhood the market price of grain went up, the price of cattle went down, and the Bread Loan, which a few months ago was a drug on the market and could be had for half its face value, was eagerly bought at a premium. All this goes to show that there is a shortage of food and that the peasant is selling his live stock to pay his taxes and to buy bread for his winter need. The peasant burns with hate not only because he has to give but also because he believes that a large part of what is taken from him, especially perishable products, becomes spoiled and has to be thrown away.

¹ In the village of Vasilevka, where the crop was very poor, the peasants declared that they could not pay in grain because they had neither the grain nor the money with which to buy it. Forty heads of families were locked up for several days and when that failed to produce the grain, ten of them were ordered to report to the Iaroslav jail. In place of ten, all forty walked the 55 versts to be locked up. The officer refused to receive them and sent them back to the village for trial by the revolutionary tribunal on the charge of fomenting an uprising by coming in large numbers when not asked to do so. Probably nothing will come of it other than the seizure of some property.

The land situation in the guberniia was not greatly affected by the revolution. In this province there were but few large estates and these, with few exceptions, were not divided up among the peasants but were taken over by the Soviet agents and administered by them as *sovkhoz* [Soviet estate]. The relation between the peasant and his new neighbor, the *sovkhoz*, is not as friendly as with the *pomeschik*, for the Soviet representative will stand no nonsense, and if the village horses get into the grain field they are either shot or kept until a heavy fine is paid. It was the original intention of the government to run the *sovkhoz* as model farms for the enlightenment of the peasants, but this experiment, too, has proved a failure and many of the formerly well-kept and paying estates are now going to ruin.¹

Today, as hundreds of years ago, the three-field system of agriculture is in practice. The helpful part played by the *zemstvo* agronomes, veterinarians, and experiment stations are no more, and when harmful insects attack the plants, as they are attacking the winter grain this fall, no one knows what to do.

The forests are also nationalized and the peasant has to pay for the timber which he cuts in the woodland. He has no right to take any but dead timber, and there are cases on record where he has set the forest on fire in order to have plenty of dead wood.

All the Soviet land legislation has no terror for the peasant. He never reads the decrees, and they would not change his way of looking at things if he did. In his mind, the village land belongs to the village community, all the theories and laws of the Communists to the contrary notwithstanding. He hires labor when he needs it and he leases part of his land when he

¹ A member of the branch of the State Bank told me that a few weeks ago the head of all the *sovkhozes* came to borrow money. When asked if he expected to pay back from the income, he laughed and said: "There will be no income. After I shall have realized on the crop I will pay the workmen and repay the bank. The *sovkhoz* that does not pay for itself I will abandon, after selling the buildings and stock, and keep those that pay." By this process of elimination, the former estates will be brought low and abandoned.

cannot himself work it, regardless of Moscow. The peasant's passive resistance is wearing out the enthusiasm of the Bolsheviks, and they are now, or soon will be, putting into law what the peasants have brought about in practice.

The agricultural population of the Iaroslav region has a hard winter ahead of it, but it is not likely to starve. They have already commenced to mix potatoes and oats with their rye flour to make it last longer. There is still something to sell. Two or three peasants were named to me who have left their land and have gone to Moscow and Petrograd in search of work, notwithstanding the warnings (which they neither read nor heed) of these cities not to come. More will follow and in this way swell the number of city unemployed and homeless. Those not too far from cities will sell milk and butter from their farms, and wood stolen from the nationalized forests.

From my informants, I learned something of the village government. Each village has its executive committee, composed of two members, a chairman and a secretary, and these are elected for a year by the villagers at one of their meetings. There are not as many meetings and not as many elections as two years ago, and the term of office is now longer than it used to be. In the village meetings are selected the delegates, one for each hundred inhabitants, to represent it at the volost meeting. At this gathering and from the assembled delegates three are chosen as the executive committee of the volost. The executive committees of the volost and village are administrative organs and carry out the instructions of the uiezdispolkom. Each volost is entitled to send delegates, one for every thousand of its inhabitants, to the uiezd meeting. Neither in the village nor in the volost are there enough Communists to mention and consequently there should not be any at the uiezd meeting; but the contrary is true. In the uiezd the Communist party and its affiliated organizations have the right to send delegates in numbers large enough to out-vote all the others. The fact that the Communists are organized and have party caucuses and party programs enables them to carry everything before them.

The peasants in general refuse to hold office under these circumstances, and those who assume it do so merely as a matter of duty.

In 1918, when the soldiers, full of new ideas, returned from the front, the villages had many Communists. It was then profitable to be a member of the party, for there was still good picking from the estates of the pomeschiks and wealthier peasants. When that was over and the party called on its members to enroll in the Red Army, the enthusiasm of the tovarischi cooled and their number decreased. In the volost I visited there were two Communists; a few months ago there were three, but one of them was caught in a dark place one night and beaten so badly that he was glad to depart never to return. One of the other two had his home set on fire and barely escaped with his life. Nothing daunted, however, he requisitioned another house and is still about. The third Communist is a young man of twenty who keeps the faith in the hope that party work will save him from the Red Army and bring him a soft job.

THE VILLAGE TEACHER

Early Sunday morning, my companion and I set out on foot to visit the neighboring villages. In one of them, we passed a two-story wooden schoolhouse and entered. The hallway was full of hay, unthreshed grain, and flax. No one was in sight, but in following a mechanical sound we came into what was once a classroom and saw a young woman of about twenty-five years beating flax. A few minutes later a man appeared with water pails and pans. My companion knew them and they told him that they were teachers of the school. I say "were," because the school is now closed for lack of funds. The color of their skin was a yellowish green and they looked as seedy as their clothes. Since February 1922 they have received no pay and for months at a time they have lived on potatoes and milk. In connection with the school there is a desiatin of land, and on this too they pay a prodnalog. From their meager salary is also deducted the value of the occasional flour donations given by the parents of

the pupils. They have a cow, but it has been difficult to find food for her. The peasants generally put aside a bit of land in an out-of-the-way place for the teacher, and it has happened two or three times that when he had cut and stacked the hay someone stole or burned it. The poverty and helplessness of the teacher has brought him so low that no one respects him and the coarse peasant seems to delight in his misery. For the coming year these teachers are out of work, and when asked how they expected to live they replied that they tried not to think of the future. They worried more about their little baby, how to feed and care for it.

Later in the day we called at the home of another teacher and found two of them, a man of nearly sixty, with a kindly face and gentle voice, who had spent more than half of his life in the schoolroom, and a woman of about thirty-five, who seemed hardened by suffering. The two were wondering what they should do. In the whole volost only two schools were to be opened and the authorities have promised to pay the teachers 25 millions a month (rye is now selling for 7 millions a pud). Assuming that the value of the ruble remains stationary, that the price of grain does not go up, and that the government keeps its promise (all of which assumptions are most unlikely), one person could keep from actual starvation on this salary. The other alternative is to teach in schools supported by peasants if there should be such schools. The government insists that if the peasants keep up a school they should make their payments through the local department of education, which reserves to itself the right to hire the teacher and make out the program. But as the peasants have no confidence in the government they refuse to do so. It is likely that the peasants and the teacher will agree among themselves, as has been done at Iaroslav. What the teacher dreads most of all is the attitude of the ignorant peasant, who will take the position that he owns the teacher because he feeds him. This is the choice these teachers have. When I asked them why they do not seek other work they replied that there is no other work.

They told me something of the way they lived last year. From August 1921 to January 1922, they received as salary 500,000 rubles (the equivalent of less than five dollars, or three puds of flour); for January they were paid 700,000 rubles, but as it was doled out months after it was due, its purchasing power had greatly diminished. For February, March, April, and May no salary has yet been paid, and for the three months of June, July, and August they have received 51 millions or about thirteen dollars. As païok for the year they had 18 puds of flour and 8 puds of potatoes. The man teacher has a family of seven, and on this pay and païok it is impossible to live, and he is obliged to supplement his teaching by carpenter work. He told me how eager he was to give his children an education, but wherever he turns he is faced by hunger, want, and humiliation. He has three children of his own in school and suffers tortures daily to see the peasant children pull out big hunks of bread while his children look on. The woman teacher supplemented her winter income by taking in sewing, by making shoes, and by hiring herself out to the peasants in summer for field work. But all these efforts barely keep body and soul together and there is nothing but cold and misery to look forward to.

If there is an occupation in Russia which is more poorly paid, more humiliating, more heartbreaking than teaching, I have not heard of it. This is especially true of village school-teaching. The woman teacher is held in contempt by the authorities because she is a *burgui* and a teacher, she is treated as a servant by the old peasants who feed her, and as a public woman by the young men of the village to whom she is often forced to sell herself in order to live.

THE VILLAGE PRIEST

In one of the villages we called on the priest. He was out and we were greeted by *matuahka*, a motherly sort of woman, two pretty daughters in the early twenties, and a son of about nineteen. My companion knew them all and in the conversation it came out that the elder of the girls had for three years been

working in the Iaroslav mills but in the recent revision of the employees' list in order to cut down the force a Communist had discovered that she was the daughter of a priest and had her discharged. The younger woman had ambition to study medicine, but when she learned that, even before coming up against the entrance requirements (being of the clergy would have counted against her) she would have to pay 500 millions as tuition, she gave up in despair. My heart ached for the two girls, who were ambitious to do something, to see something, to be somebody, but who, wherever they turned, found a door slammed in their faces. As they sat there talking they expressed their day dreams. One of these dreams was to have a hundred million rubles to hear the opera at Moscow. Before the revolution, the daughters of the clergy were occasionally invited to the homes of the nobility, but these have been driven off, and now the two girls live, as it were, on a desert. They have little to do with the people of the village and they complain that the young men are rude to them and insult them whenever they pass.

I wish someone other than a sociologist would explain the peasant. Take him in the raw and he is difficult to make out; but educate him and he is like other people. In this respect he is like a child whose mentality only the professor of education pretends to understand. Is it the war, the revolution and its excesses, that have brutalized the muzhik and have made him cruel, overbearing, and domineering? or has he always been so and has concealed these traits because of fear?

While we were talking, the *batushka* [priest], a tall man of about sixty, came in. He told us something of the village and its life. The peasants, he said, are as loyal to the church now as they were before and make their donations and payments for religious services as stingily as ever. In reply to the question whether he noticed any religious revival among his people he said, "No." With the "Living Church" his people will have nothing to do. He then related to us his recent experiences in connection with the late church troubles. One day last spring

two members of the Cheka came to him and accused him of stirring up the peasants against the government in the matter of the church treasures. When he denied the accusation, they read him three bits of paper as evidence. After they had questioned him for five hours in order to catch him they departed. Five days later the Cheka summoned him to Iaroslav, twenty miles distant, a journey which he had to make on foot. On presenting himself he was offered the choice of coming out in April (when a public gathering was planned) in favor of seizing the church treasures or of being handed over to the revolutionary tribunal. He was allowed a day of grace in which to make up his mind. The bishop, with whom he consulted, advised him to comply with the demand and save himself, his family, and others. On the appointed day, the priest appeared and made an equivocal declaration that "Christian duty demands of us that we should help the needy and that the church should share its treasures with the hungry." Next day in the official papers words were put in his mouth which he had never uttered, but it was useless to protest. A month or so passed and again the Chekists called. This time they inquired whether he had at any time of his life been associated with a religious paper and whether he thought such a paper would have popular support. He told them that he had never written for a paper and that he did not think such a paper could pay for itself because of the high cost of paper and labor. "Never mind the cost," they interrupted; "we will take care of that. The important question is, will you write for it?" To the inquiry as to the object of the paper they replied that it had a threefold purpose: (1) taking the church treasures; (2) exposing the private lives of bishops; and (3) reforming the church. The priest refused to be dragged into this mud and tried to argue his way out. Among other things he remarked that the famine situation on the Volga was pretty well under control, that the crop prospects at home were not any too bright, and that it behooved the government to take into consideration the local needs.

"What are the local needs?" asked one of the inquisitors.

"We need, for example, scythes."

Before the priest could proceed the Chekist turned to his companion and said, "Put the batushka down for two scythes."

"What else does the village need?"

"We need shoes."

"Put the batushka down for a pair of American shoes."

The Father refused to be bought, and after urging him a time longer they left him and have not been near him since.

I took up with the priest the moral and social life of the village. He thought that morally the peasants were no worse than before; but the other members of the family disagreed and called attention to various evils and especially to the *samo-gonka* [moonshine] that is being made and used. Father held his ground and insisted that the peasant is better off under moonshine than under the saloon, for now if he begins drinking too hard, the old woman takes the axe and smashes the still.

The priest is a member of the village organization and as such is entitled to three desiatins of land, which he and his children cultivate. This year's yield was 34 puds of barley, 19 puds of rye, 15 puds of oats, and 8 puds of flax, and the tax which he has already paid and hauled to Iaroslav was 19 puds and 6 pounds of rye, 8 pounds of butter, and 1½ million rubles for 3 apple trees. As long as the priest lives he has the right to the use of these three desiatins, but he is worried for fear it will be taken from his children when he dies.

KHUTOR

On the way back to our village, we went out of our course in order to see a *khutor*, or Russian homestead. It will be remembered that Stolypin made it possible by offering government assistance for peasants who desired to break away from the village communal system to take up land in fee simple. Before the war and the revolution, a number of peasants, usually the best elements of the villages, took up claims, built their homes, and settled down to be good farmers. The land nationalization hit these homesteaders particularly hard, but now that

little attention is paid to decrees, some of the peasants are once more going out in search of land which they can call their own. They are, however, under certain disadvantages. They can take up only such land as is not under cultivation, woodland or rather brush land; they receive no government support, and are exposed to lawless gangs, which are active. The homestead which we visited contained $7\frac{1}{2}$ desiatins, half of it clear. It had as nice a patch of clover as I have ever seen, and the other planted fields were in equally good condition. What pleased me most of all was the farmer himself, a very intelligent and energetic man who understood something of scientific farming.

X

LIFE IN RUSSIA

(1918-1922)

Moscow, January 1, 1923.—Since reaching Russia I have tried hard to understand the political and social life of the years 1918-20. But the history of this period is so unlike the history of any other people and period that it is very difficult to grasp. It seemed to me that an experiment and an experience such as the Russian people had should be recorded. Unfortunately, few people kept records. In the first place it was not safe, and in the second place there were other things more pressing to occupy the mind. I appealed to the more educated Russians to write out accounts of their lives during these terrible years so that the historian of the future might have material for his studies. A few did; others had their friends do so; still others gave me letters which they had received from distant parts of the empire. The papers that follow are a part of this material.

PRINCESS A'S ACCOUNT OF THE YEARS 1918-20

I suppose that you wish me to introduce the account of our existence during 1918-20 by a short description of ourselves. You know already that our family was a princely one. We were not, however, court favorites. Among our ancestors are not a few scholars, a great many liberals, and at least two prominent revolutionists. Both my husband and I went to the university; he studied economics and I law. Both of us joined political groups, he the Cadets and I the Socialist-Revolutionists. After marriage we lived abroad for some time, and then returned to our estate. We planned to make a model farm of it for the benefit of the peasants and devote ourselves to their welfare and the good of our country. We worked hard, lived modestly, and looked forward to a democratic Russia.

When the war came, we greeted it favorably. We dreaded German domination and expected great blessings from closer association with our democratic allies. My husband joined his regiment and I offered myself to the Red Cross. As the war dragged on and the incompetency of the tsarist régime came more and more to the surface, we lost all hope of victory and democracy. It seemed to us that the road to salvation was through revolution. When it in turn broke out, I rejoiced and I looked forward to the great day. I was quickly disillusioned. We had a revolution but did not know what to do with it. Our political leaders, both bourgeois and Socialist, had grown great on opposition, but had, through no fault of their own, little experience in practical politics. I can illustrate my meaning by the following story:

In April 1917, a committee from the front, made up of soldiers and officers, among whom was my husband, came to Petrograd to protest to the Soviet against its radical actions in regard to the army. When they arrived at the capital the Bolsheviks were on hand to greet and take care of the soldiers. Of the Cadets there was not a soul. My husband indignantly rushed over to the headquarters of the party, and there he learned that the Cadets were busy celebrating the anniversary of a poet.

The Bolsheviks and the reactionaries were the two groups that knew what they wanted, and in the end the Bolsheviks won.

Now to my own story. By the end of May it was quite evident that the army as a fighting force was gone and that there was not much to be hoped for from it. The soldiers became insulting and overbearing and I decided to return to our estate, which I did in June. Though we had heard rumors of what would be done to us, nothing really happened until the spring of 1918. One day the manager of the estate came running into the house with a frightened look in his face exclaiming, "The commissars are here!" I rushed to the window, and there I saw approaching a number of mounted and armed men followed by our scared villagers. A few minutes later the

mob, with the commissars at the head, burst into the room demanding that the cursed burgui give up the keys, arms, and papers. My mother-in-law, my brother, and his family who were with me, I sent into another room, while I remained to face the music. My legal training, my small experience as a speaker, and especially my knowledge of the peasant came into good service. I turned to the commissars and told them that I knew that they came to carry out the law of the land in an orderly manner and that they would, of course, state what they wanted. This seemed to make some impression on the leader, a simple peasant soldier from the neighborhood. He replied that he came to search for arms and to put us out of the house in twenty-four hours. "As to arms," I said, "we have only hunting weapons and my husband's saber, all of which you may have. In regard to putting us out, let us talk it over." They left me and after searching through the house came back with the saber and shot guns. "Tovarishi," I appealed to them, thinking it better to talk their own language, "let us proceed in an orderly and legal manner." These terms, "order, legal procedure, obedience to law," overawed them and they fell in with the idea. "You have come," I continued, "to carry out the decree which demands that we should be put out of our estate. You are doing your duty and I admire you for it. But will you please tell us where we are to go and what accommodations you have prepared for us." This took the commissars unaware and they replied that they had no place and had not thought about one. Turning from them to the peasants in the room, I asked for fair play and decent treatment. "True, true," came from the crowd. This irritated one of the commissars and he made some sneering remark about the burgui. I protested and called for a "point of order." That had the proper effect. It then occurred to me that it would be best to take the crowd out of the house and discuss the matter elsewhere. "Tovarishi," I said, "we are on important state and legal matters which require serious thought. Let us go somewhere to deliberate, to some neutral place, where you will not be influenced

by surroundings." This suggestion was not argued; the commissars and the public were deeply impressed by the big words "state affairs, serious thought, deliberation, neutral place." We adjourned to the estate office, which was in another building. When we assembled, I noticed that few of the estate peasants had followed, and desiring to have their moral support, I turned to the commissars and said, "Tovarischi, let us have a real democratic and public meeting. We have no secrets; we all wish to do what is right. Let the meeting be open to all." They fell in with this idea, and pretty soon our friendly peasants were in the room. When they had quieted down I proposed that we should take up in a just way the question whether we should be put out and where we should go. I was interrupted by the cry of a commissar: "There is no use discussing with the burgui; put her out." "Burgui!" I shouted, "what kind of a burgui am I? For twenty years I have been a Socialist, three times have I been in prison in my efforts to bring about the revolution. Please tell me how long have you been a Socialist, how many times have you been in prison?" This shot laid low the commissar and found a friendly response in the audience. "Now," I went on, "let us get to work, and I suggest that we have a bell so as to keep order." I reached for a bell which was near by, rang it, and when all quieted down, I called to the attention of the public that in all orderly meetings it was important to have a chairman, and proposed two persons, one for chairman and the other for secretary. My nominees were unanimously elected and installed, though they had not the least idea as to what was required of them. I then rose and asked if I might address the meeting. The chairman granted the permission.

"Mr. Chairman and Tovarischi: The law requires of you to take over the estate, and as a law-abiding citizen of this republic I am ready to hand it over to you. But you will agree that this is a serious matter. An estate is not a cloak which you can take off and put on the shoulders of another person. In the first place, I wish to point out to you that on our estate there

are many workmen who receive regular pay and make their living. Of course, you, commissars, will from now on pay their wages and see that they are taken care of." Then turning to our peasants, and pointing to the commissars, I added, "From now on these tovarischi will pay you and you must look to them. The law has freed me from this obligation." One of the commissars became quite excited and pleaded in a begging voice that he had no money. Another was insolent, and I again appealed to the chairman on a point of order and took the fight out of him. I then proceeded with point two.

"Tovarischi, you are capable agriculturalists; you know as well as I do that an estate must be kept up. Now that you are going to take over this estate I ought to tell you in what condition it is, and what it needs." I enumerated a host of things needed—plows, wagons, horses, cows, machinery, etc., and gave an estimate as to the cost. Again one commissar pleaded that he had not thought of that phase of the question, that he had no money; and another commissar tried to spoil the effect of my speech by casting slurs on the "burgui." As before, I called him down by rising to a "point of order." The discussion became general on the questions of payment of workmen and keeping up the estate. The commissars wrestled with the problem, and finally one of them proposed that I should help them and another moved that I should be made a member of the land committee, the committee that handled the land question in our neighborhood. By this time, no one interested himself any longer as to whether we should or should not be put out of our house. The strained relations of the beginning had disappeared and we were now tovarischi engaged in the common cause of settling the land problem. While all were in this mood, I turned to the commissars and invited them to have a cup of tea. As we walked toward the house, I engaged the most important one of them in conversation and found him to be a simple soldier who had recently returned from the front. We had much in common to talk about and we became quite friendly. When they departed they gave us the assurance that

for the time being we should not be disturbed. On the following day a man was sent to take over the estate and the supplies in the warehouse, leaving us the house and putting us all on a paioik.

When a little later a decree was promulgated permitting former estate owners to receive a "labor portion" of land by joining the peasants' organization, my husband and brother each took one. This gave us about ten desiatins, a few head of cattle, a couple of horses, and a few farming implements. My husband and I went to Novgorod to live, but my brother, an absent-minded professor who had never put his hand to the plow, remained to till the land under the guidance of an old peasant nurse. He managed to seed a few desiatins, and in the late summer sent for us to help him harvest, for had he hired help he would *ipso facto* have lost the right to the use of the soil. On the place there was little to eat and nothing to buy, and I was forced to steal potatoes from our own potato fields. I used to get up very early in the morning and, in the company of another member of the family, sneaked over to the potato patch and there, while one stood guard, the other crawled on all fours, scratched out potatoes, and concealed them in the hedge to be smuggled into the house later in the day. In this way we lived until the harvest was over. After we had threshed out the grain, which we had to do some distance from home, our machine having been broken by the tovarischi, we had forty puds, of which my brother took one-half and we the other. I advised him not to keep it at home but to conceal it somewhere, for I feared it would be taken away; but he, being a professor of mathematics and logic, reasoned that in view of the fact that he was allowed to keep the land and had raised a crop with his own hands he would surely be left in possession of the fruit of his labor. I, on the other hand, had less faith and gave our twenty puds to different peasants to keep for me. Three days after the threshing, a new commissar rode up and told us to get at once out of the house and leave everything behind. This time the "point of order" was quite ineffective and we had to

go. Our peasant friends were more helpful, and, through them, we saved some of our things and had them moved to Luga, where my brother remained and lived on the twenty puds which I had hidden. My family returned to Novgorod.

The winter of 1918-19 was one of great hardships in Novgorod. The Soviet *paio*k of bread and salt herring was insufficient to sustain life. The bread was made of flour and oats, and when chewed, the oats got between the teeth. After each meal we pulled out the oats from each others' mouths with small pincers, and my husband became quite an expert in this work. After a time we found another method of getting rid of the oats. By drying the bread, and then soaking it in water, we made the straw and oats come to the surface; and when we skimmed them off we dried the bread again and ate it. But, as I said, the food supplied by the government was far too little to keep us alive and we had to think of other ways to procure our daily bread. This was not easy. Buying and selling was prohibited, and soldiers guarded all the gateways to prevent the peasants from bringing in food. Milk we needed for our two children, and in order to get it we used to leave town early to meet, a mile or two beyond it, peasant women with milk. With them we traded things to wear for things to eat. Sunday was given up entirely to the search for bread. We would strike out for the country, either by train or cart or on foot, taking with us clothing, jewels, salt (which we had saved up from the *paio*k), and offer them to the peasants in exchange for food. Occasionally, word was passed around that on a certain day a peasant would offer horse meat in the forest near the city, and thither we rushed and brought back bones and tough meat and ate it sparingly.

With the advance of spring food became scarcer. We held a family council and decided to break up the family. My husband was to remain in Novgorod while I and the two children were to go to some place where things to eat were easier to procure. We studied the map and selected an out-of-the-way, sleepy old Finnish town, or rather village, situated on

a branch of the Volga, too far away for the Petrograd and Moscow bread-seekers.

After a three-day journey we arrived at our destination and easily found a place to live. I secured a position as secretary in one of the Soviet institutions and earned enough money to keep the little family in bread, potatoes, and linseed oil. Sugar, coffee, tea, soap, and such things we had none. Neither had we kerosene or candles, and at night we got a glimmer of light from a primitive oil lamp and the wood fire. We had plenty of fuel, for we were allowed to cut trees in the forest. The few things we brought along we traded for a cow, for the native would under no consideration take money, and the milk and butter helped out wonderfully.

We lived peacefully for a year. One day I was asked to make out a questionnaire, and among other things I incidentally mentioned that I had had a legal training. I completely forgot about it until I was summoned to the *gubiust* [department of justice] and notified that I had been selected as criminal investigator and that I must assume my duties at once. The duties would, of necessity, force me to be away from home weeks at a time, and I therefore pleaded with the authorities that on account of my two children I could not accept the office. All my pleadings were of no avail and I was told that I had no choice in the matter and that I must do what I was told. I decided to go to the *gubzdrav* [department of health] where there was a shortage of trained medical help, because of an epidemic, and offer myself as a Red Cross nurse. The head of the *gubzdrav* threatened to arrest me for not telling him sooner that I had had war experience, but forgave me and took me into his hospital. This caused a row between the two departments, but in the end the *gubzdrav* won out and I was enabled to remain near my children.

I worked in the hospital a year under very unfavorable and unsanitary conditions and I finally broke down. When I recovered it was already toward the end of August 1920, and in the meantime my husband had joined me. After thinking the

matter over we concluded to return to Novgorod, where food conditions had greatly improved owing to the New Economic Policy and a good crop. I went to the gubzdrav and asked for a leave in which to recuperate, but it was understood that I would not return. When I had secured that, it was necessary to obtain seven different permits, each in triplicate, before we could depart. Each of us had to have a permit to leave, a permit to take our sewing-machine, a permit to take flour, beds, chickens, potatoes, and hand baggage. This wasted time and shoe leather, but in the end we got all the necessary papers. After securing the "documents," we had to wait three days for the whistle of the uncertain and unscheduled steamer. When the joyful sound was heard we hurried with our belongings to the wharf and asked the captain to take us on board. He offered to do so, but without our baggage, and as that contained all our worldly belongings, we could not agree and were left behind. We knew that another ship would follow in a day or two, the captain of which was known to some of our friends, and we utilized the interval in securing letters to him. Sure enough, the next day the expected steamer hove in sight, the captain was agreeable, and we went on board, bag and baggage. At last we were on our way. But after we had gone three versts, there was a crash—the rudder was gone. The captain ordered us all ashore and promised that in the morning he would send the baggage down the river to where another boat would take it on. As we had no choice, we waded ashore and walked through the mud and rain to a village, some two versts away. Next morning we went to the point of embarkment, but our baggage was not there and we soon learned that the crew of the broken steamer refused to carry out the orders of the captain. Under the circumstances, we hired a small boat and brought the baggage ashore. This took us two days, during which time our friends visited us and tried to persuade us to return to them. On the third day another steamer came, the captain of which was willing to take the baggage but demanded that the passengers follow along the shore for seven versts to lighten the load. To

this we agreed. For three versts all went well, and then the tub got stuck in the mud. When all other efforts to budge the steamer failed, it was decided to harness the one hundred and fifty or so men passengers to a long line to get her off. After several vain efforts, the passengers gave one strong pull, with the result that the cable broke and the men fell over one another. The boat was budged loose, however, and drifted into navigable water. We boarded it and after a time landed at Z. By this time our bread was consumed and we had to live almost wholly on potatoes.

At Z we drove to the station, where we presented our papers and asked for tickets. The station master discovered that our "documents" were not in order. After much pleading he yielded the point but raised another. We had all together about thirty-five puds of baggage, and according to regulations we were not allowed more than eight, or two puds per person. The agent refused to accept our goods as freight on the ground that our papers were not in order. All our pleadings were in vain. There was nothing else to do but spend the night in the station and wait for the wisdom of the morning. We spread out our blankets on the floor and put the two children to sleep. My husband and I could not sleep and sat there watching the coming and going of the odds and ends of ragged humanity. Among them was a man who ran here and there gathering around him a crowd to go somewhere. We became interested and asked him where he was going. He explained that he was leading a party of refugees to B, on the C railroad, the very place we were trying to reach. We offered him fifteen pounds of flour if he would take us, baggage and all, into his freight car. He jumped at the chance, and with his help we loaded our freight and our children into a corner of a box car in the yard and waited. The night was dark and we could not tell where we were or where we were going. When the train stopped, which was quite often, we heard the weeping of children in another corner of the car, but could not see them. As it was very cold, our guide stole some wood at one of the stations

and started a fire in an iron bucket. By the light of the flame we made out that in addition to our family there were our guide, two women, and eleven hungry and almost naked children. We gave them a bucket of potatoes, which they at once cooked and ate, and then they fell asleep. We passed a sleepless night in the jerky car, making but little headway, for our train made long stops. When it became light I went to the door to look out, and as I did so a member of the railway police caught sight of me and shouted, "Get out of here, you dirty burgui; this car is for refugees and not for one like you." We tried to pacify him, but he would listen neither to reason nor to pleading and hurried off to get help to throw us out on this wayside station, to remain God knows how long. It was about the last straw to our misfortunes and I was about to break down and weep. Our guide turned to us and said, "Don't cry. Just close the door. The Chekist never took the number of the car, and when he comes back he will be unable to find you. Crawl into a corner and lie there." This we did and it worked out as the guide had predicted. The Chekist ran here and there, and when he finally found us, the train was already moving and we in it. After three days of bumping in this freight car, we reached the station B, where we had to change for Novgorod.

Our troubles were not yet over. The station master, trying to hold us up, made trouble for us in the matter of tickets and baggage. When honest efforts failed, I went to the baggage master and offered to pay him the equivalent of the cost of the tickets if he would arrange everything. He was only too willing. He weighed all the baggage and found it to come within the legal limit; he made out false tickets and got the family on board, and in good time we came to Novgorod.

At the station we were met by a friend, who congratulated us on coming a day late, for had we arrived a day sooner we should have had to share our apartment with five soldiers. A few days before, a student living in the apartment had been arrested, his room sealed, and five soldiers placed in the adjoining room to see that no one broke the seal. To watch the five

soldiers, a friend of the family, the same who met us at the station, took up his quarters; and all six had a grand time abusing the Bolsheviks behind their backs.

What happened to us since then, you already know.

A LETTER FROM A TEACHER

IVANOVSK, November 23, 1922

HONORABLE SIR, IVAN VLADIMIROVICH:

Before proceeding with my story, let me make a short explanation, for it may perhaps seem strange to you that a woman, of whom you have never heard, should write to you. I recently called on Natalia Vasilievna, who had a letter from you in which you asked for an account of the life of teachers in Siberia. Half jestingly and half seriously Natalia suggested that I write it up, for I have often talked of doing so. At times when life became bitter and unbearable, when the heart boiled over with the injustices, I was seized with a desire to take pen in hand and pour out the pain and sorrow in me so that those at the capital might hear the cry of anguish and pay some attention. But there was always something else to do, and I put it off. Gradually the acute pain passed into melancholy, and then into a feeling of hopelessness—that it was not worth wasting paper, for nothing would come out of it anyway. But your letter stirred once more in me the wish to acquaint headquarters with our life. I wish that Comrade Lunacharski could read this letter. No, perhaps it is better that he should not. I would rather write to you as to a private man, and not as to an official of the Commissariat of Education. Your letter gave me a good opinion of you (do not take this as flattery); you impressed me as a man with a gentle soul, deeply concerned for popular education, and sympathetically interested in the life of the teachers. You asked to know how we teachers live in Siberia, and I have decided to give you this information. Having made my explanation, I shall now proceed with the story.

You know in a general way, of course, that the material situ-



Top: *Dressed up and ready for the dance*
Bottom: *Women dancing the lezginka*

ation of the teachers is very bad. But I doubt whether you are able to form an idea just how bad it really is here. For the year (September 1921 to September 1922) we have received one hundred millions in salary, and since September we have been given a few kopeks more. That is to say, during the last three months we have had to live on the food of St. Anthony. This is not all. Of this wonderful sum of one hundred millions, we received seventy last September, so that we had had just thirty millions to live on for eleven months.

The condition of some of the teachers is so critical that it seems more like a comedy than a tragedy. We often repeat laughingly the following anecdote. One of our teachers, who went to Cheliabinsk to a conference, was so poorly dressed that she looked like a beggar. At this meeting a great deal was said about the poor condition of the teachers. An official from Omsk intimated that the teachers exaggerated, and demanded proof. As he walked out our teacher stopped in front of him and said, "You ask for proof; look at me." She showed him her clothes, which were nothing more than rags and patches. When another official, this time of Cheliabinsk, tried to encourage us of Ivanovsk by saying, "Have patience, your burdens will soon be lightened," this same teacher remarked that if she had to wait much longer she would be as light as a feather. Her remark was greeted with laughter, for her clothes were so tattered and torn that one could easily imagine her dressed in feathers. Funny, wasn't it? It would have been very funny had it not been so very sad.

We often smile while the heart is breaking. It is rarely that one laughs in our circle. One day I called on a fellow teacher and found her sitting on her bed in a dark and narrow little corner at the entrance—this is all the room she had. When I asked her where she prepared her food, she laughed. I felt greatly embarrassed, fearing that I had made some bad break. The mistress of the house was also present and the teacher turned to her, saying, "She wishes to know where I do my cooking." Then they both laughed, which embarrassed me still

more. Finally the mistress of the house explained to me that the teacher had no need of cooking, for she had nothing to cook; that bread and water was her daily food; that she did not even have barley coffee.

While we were talking, the mistress of the house was cleaning her teapot, and when about to throw out the used tea leaves (it was not tea at all, but grass), the teacher asked for them, for, she said, she was tired of just hot water and needed something to flavor it. Is it comedy or is it tragedy when that which other people throw into the slop bucket, the teacher seeks as a gift? All glory and praise to you, much-suffering teacher!

There are other cases, more or less similar. For three months one teacher could not send a letter home, for she had no money for a stamp. She managed somehow to scrape together thirty-five thousand rubles, but that was fifteen thousand short of the price of the stamp. I ought to say that this paper money is good only for stamps, for merchants do not take it in trade. The poor woman did not know what to do. She could not bring herself to borrow. Finally the longing to hear from home was so strong that it conquered her pride and she made up her mind to ask for a loan. She applied to one teacher, and he smilingly replied that if he had so much money he would buy himself a smoke. She asked another teacher, who told her that she had just tried in vain to borrow forty thousand to buy a glass of milk. All this actually happened in our town last June. When we related it to the official at Cheliabinsk he laughed and thought it was a good joke. Indeed it sounded more like an anecdote than a fact. If I were to tell the boy who sells matches on the street that the teacher could not find fifteen thousand rubles with which to buy a stamp, he also would laugh. How unbelievable it all sounds to the rest of the world, which is handling millions and billions! Is it comedy or tragedy?

I have time and again envied the men who work on the railroad, and one time I really thought seriously of quitting teaching and securing a job as a section hand. Workmen are treated better than teachers. For a time we were given as paik

flour only, while they had flour, meat, sugar, and other things. For overtime they received manufactured goods, while I, who worked eight hours a day in the schoolroom and gave, in addition, free private lessons at night, had not received one inch of cloth for two years of overtime work. When I became worn out from these tremendous exertions and was ill for a month, the authorities would not even give me bread, on the ground that sick people could not eat. Weak and trembling, I was forced to return to my classroom or starve.

Indeed, why shouldn't I, who have finished high school, who have had, in addition, normal school training and nine years of teaching experience, grab a pick and shovel and go to work on the section? I wonder what Moscow would say to that. What is there especially queer about a young woman of good health taking up physical labor? There is nothing queer about it. A woman who can turn from one kind of work to another should be praised rather than blamed. Physical work in itself has no terrors for me. I rather like it, like being out of doors. Nevertheless, I cannot make up my mind to give up teaching. Have I the right to take up manual labor, after having worked so hard, after my parents had made so many sacrifices to give me an education in order that I might lighten the way for people who live in darkness? From the time that I was a little girl I have had ever before me the thought of being a teacher. Should I now give it up and work with pick and shovel? I cannot do it. And yet when I look at my father and mother, who ruined their health on my account, and how they toil and suffer, I am filled with shame and my heart aches with pain. Instead of being a help to them, I, an educated and healthy daughter, am supported by a sixty-year-old father. And yet, I somehow cannot bring myself to the point to make the change. Hundreds of others as good or better than I have, however, done so.

I keep asking myself the question, how long shall I be able to hold out. My clothes and the clothes of my family will soon look like the feather dress of that poor teacher. What am I

going to do when my fur coat can no longer be mended and my felt boots patched? As to linen, that is regarded not as a necessity but a bourgeois luxury. But this cannot be said of fur coats and felt boots in this Siberian climate. Educated people deny the possibility of miracles in this twentieth century. But I live far from cultured society, books, and theaters. I live in the forest where the only music is the wind in the trees and the howling of the wolves. I live among ignorant people who believe in ghosts, spirits, fairies, and other wonderful things. I have been infected by them and have come to believe in miracles: First, that the plan of the universe will change, that the earth will change its course, that the rays of the sun instead of shining on the equator will fall on Siberia, which will become a tropical country, and I will deposit my fur coat and felt boots in a museum. Second, that some time or other we shall get enough salary to enable us to buy felt boots or a secondhand fur coat. I must confess that there is more likelihood for the first miracle than for the second. I have read somewhere about Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest, and I keep asking myself to which category I am to belong—those who survive or those who perish. Perhaps the first. I can now do without gloves and live; perhaps I may be able in time to do without shoes and clothing. Let us hope so.

As you read this letter you will probably say: "This woman talks of nothing but felt boots and fur coats; she thinks of nothing but material things. There is not a word about the higher things." People cry because they feel pain. It is hard to meditate spiritually on an empty stomach. But you must not get the idea that our discouragement is due wholly to the shortage of food. We lack also textbooks, paper, pencils, and other school supplies. There are those who say that we should do without textbooks. This may be possible at Moscow or other cultural centers, where the teacher can, whenever he likes, supply the necessary information; but it cannot be done in our wilderness where books are unattainable luxuries.

Let me illustrate. Last year the railway library gave the

children books free of cost, but asked us teachers to pay ten thousand rubles a month, at a time when we did not get a kopek in salary. All that we teachers have to read are the fairy stories which our pupils think fit to lend us. I should like to ask the learned professors of education how they would teach geography without textbooks, maps, globes, and atlases. The little knowledge acquired in high school is, owing to trying conditions and worries, gradually being forgotten, and there are no means at hand to learn something new. We have nothing to read; we have nothing to write on or to write with. All our equipment consists of sticks which we use in arithmetic. From all this please do not think that our Siberian children are a lot of savages. I would not trade them off for the children of Moscow. In some respects, especially in manual training, they are superior to the pupils of big cities.

Our best work is done out of school, in the evenings, and when at play. Without these activities we should die of weariness. We have organized a club which has for its object moral and mental development. The pupils, with a little help from me, have drawn up the constitution and by-laws. Here they are: (1) To speak the truth always; (2) not to take other people's things, and to return objects found; (3) to keep clean; (4) to help one another; (5) to keep out of other people's gardens; (6) to respect older people; (7) not to drink strong drinks and not to smoke; (8) not to fight and not to quarrel; (9) to be kind to birds and animals.

This club has decided to devote one day each week to the kind of work that each wishes to do—painting, carving, knitting, reading, singing, dancing, playing. All this seems so silly, and the pupils of the Moscow schools would undoubtedly sneer if they should see us at work. But this is the day that gives us all the most joy. To be sure, most of the things done have no other value than that of personal satisfaction, but now and then something worth while is produced.

We have wonderful music for dancing—the music which we, ourselves, make. Our songs drive the dogs from the street,

but we sing nevertheless. I regard the lack of good music in school as a great defect in education. But how to carry it on in a school of only one teacher, and she a bit hard of hearing, is a great problem. I cannot understand how it is possible for the people at the head of education to pay so little attention to the question of music. I have asked and pleaded that singing should be made a required subject, but I am like one shouting in the wilderness. Yet everyone admits that music plays a great rôle in the life of the individual and in the life of the nation.

The songs of a people give not only its psychology but also its geography and history. Take for example the unmelodious, melancholy music of the Samoyeds which suggests the moaning of the wind and the raging of the storm. Listen to the words and you will get their life history. They sing of cold snows, of blizzards, of reindeer, of the misery and sorrow that come to them through water and vodka. They have given you everything that is in them. Their songs like their lives have neither rich color nor difficult problems. They are pale, depressing, grey, monotonous, a reflection of the lives of the people.

Contrast these Samoyed songs with the colorful, tuneful songs of the Ukraine. No one in Russia loves to sing and sings so well as the people of Little Russia. And what songs! When sad, every one weeps; when merry, every one shouts with joy; and when they call to dance, the old men cannot keep their feet still. Turn from the Ukraine to the songs of the Volga. There is something big and heroic about them. A nation's life is depicted in its song. And yet our public schools make so little use of what seems to me is such a fundamental part of our lives. Children must have music, and if good music is denied them, they will pick up the degrading songs of the street. A school without music is no school at all.

If it is not too much trouble, will you be so good as to bring this whole question to the attention of the authorities? Write an article on the subject in some educational journal. I would do it myself, but I am cut off from the world. I live, as it were, on a desert island. I do not even know whether we have such

journals. I should like to write some more, but my hand refuses to do my bidding. I get worked up when I talk of singing. It has swallowed up all my other ideas and I have forgotten what else I wished to say to you. Song is my weak point. I love it, but unfortunately my hearing is defective, and I do not know one note from another.

I end my story. When I shall have gathered my thoughts, I will write again if my chatter does not weary you.

Please pardon me for the blank space, but I am so exhausted that I have not the strength to write more.

MRS. IVANOV'S STORY

You ask me how I lived through the years, 1918-21. I wish that I could tell you. It all seems like a nightmare. We were too much occupied with the question how to exist today to think how we managed yesterday. I lived through it somehow, as you see, and that is about all that I can say.

Perhaps I can in part answer your question by describing a day of my life. Any day will do, for the difference between one and another was merely a difference in the degree of misery.

As you know, the Tsar's war killed my husband, the Keren-ski revolution took my estate, and the Lenin coup d'état confiscated my bank account. I was left alone, and my worldly wealth consisted of a few personal belongings. As long as they lasted I refused to work for the Bolsheviks, but the time came when I had to bow to them and become an employee of the Soviet State. In return for my services the government promised to care for me. It has failed to live up to the bargain because it promised more than it could do.

My story would run more smoothly if I could tell it in the third person. Imagine, therefore, that I am Mrs. Ivanov, a widow, still young in years but old in suffering. Mrs. Ivanov lives on the fifth floor of an apartment that had in 1914 all the modern conveniences. Since then it has been taken over by the State and handed over to "house" and "ward" committees. In

other words, it is under communal management. The old saying that everybody's business is nobody's business still holds true today, notwithstanding the Bolshevik theories to the contrary. The house is shamefully neglected. The central heating-plant has been abandoned, the water and drain pipes are out of order, the front doors are nailed up, and the back stairs are dirty, dark, and slippery.

Mrs. Ivanov wakes up in her damp, dirty, unheated room. It is dark outside and cheerless inside. She puts off getting out of the warm bed as long as possible. As she lies there all kinds of gloomy forebodings pass through her mind: Maybe the Communist house committee will put her, a *burgui*, out; maybe she will be arrested; maybe she will be deprived of her *paio*k of food; or maybe die of typhus, for she feels a louse crawling over her. This frightens her so that she throws off the dirty bed cover, jumps out on the cold floor, and begins to dress hastily. Her wardrobe, not only that which she wears but all that she possesses, is on the bed before her. Everything made of cotton or wool has been piled on the bed to keep her from freezing. The pile is gradually decreasing, partly from wear and partly from trade for food. There are two noticeable things about her coat—a hole in the sleeve and the figures 123. For the sake of efficiency, human beings, like machines, are numbered.

The water in the bucket is frozen, but she breaks through the ice to get enough water to wash her face. How cold it is! The hands and fingers are so numb that it is difficult to dress. Owing to lack of fuel there can be no warm breakfast. Indeed she is thankful that she has anything to eat at all. The day before she waited a considerable time in front of shop No. 20 to get her monthly food *paio*k. It consisted of one-eighth of a pound of baked and pounded sunflower shells, called coffee; three worm-eaten dried fish, known as *vobla*; and two herrings. While dressing she breaks off and chews pieces of *vobla*. She puts a pinch of sunflower into her pocket to be made into coffee at the office, where there is hot water. She turns from

her food to her bed to pick off the lice. How she wishes that she had hot water and soap for washing her sheets and her linen. Everything is so dirty that it sickens her. She has not much time to deliberate, for it is time to go to work. Hastily she pulls on a pair of felt boots, once new but now so old and out of shape that they are like two bags, and over each she wraps pieces of tarpaulin, called overshoes. Her small feet are lost in these bags, and in order to keep them on she ties string around them.

Thus dressed she hurries out in the street, where she sees others as badly dressed also hurrying. Street cars are not running so there is nothing to do but tramp. Most of the people keep in the middle of the street, where the footing is better than on the sidewalks. Kerosene-burning motors dash by on their way to or from a prominent Communist's house or office. It is not safe to dispute the right of way with the chauffeurs. Mrs. Ivanov hurries on, for should she be late she may be accused of sabotaging and called a counter-revolutionist and have her food païok reduced.

At last she is in, just in time. Mrs. Ivanov's work is to register incoming and outgoing correspondence and to write out orders for fuel. Most of the time there is nothing to do: there is no correspondence and no fuel. Each of the hundreds of employees uses the time on his hands as he can. Mrs. Ivanov reads a French novel so as to take her mind away from herself. The room is cold and she shivers. Some of the younger and prettier women fare better. They work or sit in the warm offices of the section chiefs. They are classed as employees of the first class and receive an extra food ration. Should there be shoes or clothing to distribute, the wants of the chiefs and favorite employees are attended to first. If there is anything left—but there seldom is. When the supply of shoes runs short, those who were left without are offered fishhooks and needles, of which there happens to be a stock on hand.

Though there is nothing to do, Mrs. Ivanov must be at her place every day. When the office is closed on account of a

Communist holiday, she must take part in the procession and sing of the blessings of the Third International.

At four o'clock the offices close and Mrs. Ivanov starts for her ice-cold home. On arriving, the first thing to do is to walk down five flights of stairs with the slop bucket and climb up as many stairs with a pail of water, spilling more than half of it on the way. She now pulls off her coat and starts a fire in her stove. It is a tiny sheet-iron affair. There is no chimney in the room, and the stove pipe is put through a broken window pane. For fuel she uses chips of wood she has picked up, pieces of furniture, and, lately, some of her husband's books. On the top of the stove she cooks her supper, herring or vobla. Sometimes the paiok contains frozen potatoes, and then these are added to the pot. She has to eat by the light of her stove, for the electric light is turned on only when it is very dark or only every other day.

The room is so dark, cold, and cheerless that Mrs. Ivanov feels that she must run away, must talk to somebody. Before leaving she locks up everything for fear that the two men who were put in the room next to her will steal the few things she has, including her vobla. It is black and still outside. No cars are running, no cabs are heard, and no lights are seen. Here and there a light glimmers from some upper story. The Nevski looks like a deserted city. She avoids the snow piles on the sidewalk by keeping on the street, shuffles along, and finally reaches the home of Vera Mikhailovna.

She climbs up the back stairs and knocks. After a time some one is heard unbarring the door and calling, "Who's there?" She is allowed to come in and her friends seem pleased to see her. The family is having supper, and what a supper: millet porridge, black bread, horse meat, potatoes, and tea! It cannot be true. How did they manage. The husband is a professor in two different schools and special adviser in other Soviet institutions, but all these efforts would not entitle him to so much food. The family note the look of astonishment and explain. Michael, the son, has a position in one of the Soviet institutions

and recently he was sent by his chiefs on a special mission to Tambov guberniia. His paper instructions said that he was to make an investigation, but his oral instructions were to bring back something to eat. It is the only way to break through the blockade. Buying and selling is forbidden. No one is allowed to bring in food and no one is permitted to go after it. If one is caught, the food is confiscated and the offender locked up or shot. One of the ways of getting around it by those in authority is to commission some one to go into the food districts "to investigate." Michael had just returned from one of his investigations and had brought back as his share twenty pounds of millet, two pounds of oil, thirty-six pounds of rye flour, and thirty-six pounds of potatoes. He had also brought bacon and got it as far as Petrograd, but there it had been taken from him.

The family offer her food, but Mrs. Ivanov declares that she is not hungry. No one is deceived, however, and when she is coaxed a second time she accepts a plate of porridge. How good it tastes! She could eat a potfull of it, but she positively declines a second helping. She realizes what the food means to the family. She is offered a cup of tea, which she takes; pulling out her lump of sugar, she bites off a small bit and sips the tea through it.

The conversation that is carried on has to do almost wholly with material things. Michael tells how he and his companions have been tearing down houses for fuel, tearing up water pipes for stovepipes. Another member of the family relates the tragic end of this man or that woman who has starved to death in his room. When that topic has been exhausted the head of the family looks to the right and to the left, puts his finger to his lips, and when all is silent whispers: "Trotsky has arrested Lenin"; or "the soldiers have mutinied"; or "the Whites are coming to our aid." These bits of news put some cheer in us.

Well, it is time to go home. It is not really late, but it is not safe. The hostess turns to Mrs. Ivanov and says, "My dear, I do not ask you to stay longer because last night a young

girl was stopped on the street and stripped of her clothing. The poor thing had to run home practically naked. I cannot allow you to go home alone. Michael will take you as far as the Nevski." Mrs. Ivanov declines, until Michael explains that he has to go outside anyway to steal fuel.

On returning to her fifth-floor apartment Mrs. Ivanov bangs on the door until one of the occupants of her apartment comes to open. This person tells her that the "house committee" has issued an order for Mrs. Ivanov, who is under forty-five, to break the ice and clear off the snow in front of the house.

Her room is icy cold, and there is nothing to do but get into bed. She pulls off one piece of clothing after another, throws them on the foot of the bed to keep her warm, and crawls in. After a time she feels a bit warmer and reaches for the papers left by the house committee. One of them calls for her to clear the snow; the other to give the measurements of her room, accompanied by a sketch, and a description of the citizens who occupy it, et cetera. Before she has quite finished reading, the light goes out. Perhaps there is something wrong with the power house, or perhaps the bulb has burned out. If the latter, how is a new one to be secured? Darkness everywhere. The silence is interrupted by a mouse or rat. Mrs. Ivanov is afraid, not so much for herself as for the vobla. While her thoughts follow the mouse she feels a louse crawling over her and she begins to worry about typhus. Everything is quiet again and she just begins to fall asleep when she is aroused by the noise of an automobile. "It is the Cheka coming to arrest me!" But no, the motor has gone on. She is wide awake and notices the noise of the mouse, and the fear of the vobla comes over her again. She is afraid to get out of bed to see, and so she assures herself that mice do not eat vobla. At last she falls asleep and dreams. Why can she not just sleep and dream all the time? It is the most agreeable part of her daily life. But as soon as the dawn comes she wakes to face another cold and hungry day.

ANNA PETROVNA'S STORY

To tell you the whole story of my life during 1918-20 would take too long and be too painful. I will just narrate one or two incidents which will give you an idea of the atmosphere in which we lived.

As you know, our family consists of mother, brother, and four sisters. One day brother went to make a call on a friend who was ill, and while there the police surrounded the apartment house and arrested every one found in it, including my brother. When we learned the sad news, mother fainted and we girls became almost hysterical. We could not imagine why he should be arrested, but we knew that the revolutionary tribunals shot people on mere suspicion. We belonged to a well-known bourgeois family and that was enough to condemn us.

For two days I, as the oldest of the sisters, ran from one Soviet bureau to another to find out in which of the many prisons brother was kept. I feared that if we did not get food to him in time he would starve. After I had located him, I set to work to get him freed. One official sent me to another, but after a week's running around I stood face to face with the man who had in his hands the power of life and death. He was a young workman intoxicated with power, but as I learned later, not bad at heart. His feet were on the desk, his guns by his side, and a cigarette was in his mouth. He looked hard, trying to frighten me; but when he realized how faint and worn I was, he softened a bit and even smiled. When he learned who I was and what I wanted he became interested. He was apparently pleased that the daughter of the famous Petrograd capitalist should come to ask a favor from him. He became more communicative and said that he knew my father, had worked for him, and had been well treated. He picked up his gun and began to play with it. "You know," he said, "if I wanted to, I could have your brother shot; if I wanted to, I could have him freed. I have not decided which I will do. I shall look into the case and perhaps I shall let him go." With that he dismissed me.

I returned home with the joyful news, but found my sisters full of evil forebodings. Ever since January 1918, rumors had circulated that all the bourgeoisie would be killed. The date was indefinite, but the certainty of the killing was never questioned. It began to get on our shattered nerves. On this very day one of my sisters was told in secret by one of our former servants, an old peasant woman, that the killing would take place this coming night. We held a council of war and decided that without saying a word to mother, we would stand watch during the night. We examined possible hiding-places and means of escaping. My watch was in the dark hours of the morning; but when Mary, who had been on guard came to wake me and said, "Get up; it is your watch," I did not know what it was all about. "What watch?" I asked. "The watch to keep the Bolsheviks from killing us." I could not make out what she was talking about, and she, rather than have any more words and fuss, did guard duty for me. Nothing happened that night. The day following was mother's birthday, and we celebrated until it was two or three o'clock in the morning, partly for fear of lying down; and when we finally went to bed, we fastened every door. It seemed as if we had just fallen asleep when we were awakened by shots, followed by woeful cries, which sounded to us, who were forever thinking of St. Bartholomew, as if people were having their throats cut. At last, we thought, our turn has come. We all jumped from our beds, ran toward each other, all pale as death—the killing had begun. As the cries died down, we became a little more bold, and I pulled on a coat, moved up to the outside door and peeped out. Gradually we became bolder and went out into the yard to investigate, and this is what we learned. Two thieves who tried to break in had been scared off by the porter. One of them had shot twice at the porter and missed him; the other tried to escape, but in jumping over the wall got entangled in the barbed wire. His cries so frightened the porter that he, too, began to scream, and it was their combined yells that had sounded to us like wailings and weepings.

XI

DAGESTAN

(FEBRUARY—MARCH 1923)

About the middle of January 1923, Mr. Samurski, vice-president of the Dagestan Republic, called at the office of the American Relief Administration in Moscow to ask for help for the starving mountaineers of that state. I was asked to return with him to investigate, and we agreed to start in a few days; but it was not before the evening of February 12 that we got on the Tiflis Express. We reached Kharkov on time, but from there on were blocked by snowdrifts, so that we made Rostov twelve hours late, and the farther we went the more time we lost. Our train had a wagon-lit and a dining-car, and was fairly comfortable. Food was plentiful at the stations and not dear, but was especially good, cheap, and abundant east of Rostov.

On the dark and cold early morning of February 16, being then twenty hours late, we came to the Dagestan capital, Makhach-Kala. This dirty, smelly little town was in 1722 honored by a visit from Peter the Great, after whom it took its name, Petrovsk, or Petrovsk Port. But more recently, a greater than Peter has come, Makhach-Kala, a noted Bolshevik warrior; and he, in turn, has become the patron saint. In appearance and odor, Makhach-Kala is like so many of the other cities along the Turkish Black Sea and Russian Caspian. Its cotton mill is the only thing worth noticing at present because it is one of the very few mills in Russia that is more than self-supporting. It not only takes care of its running expenses, but also pays the bills of the state in so far as they are paid at all. There are several reasons for its success. It has had, until the present, large pre-war reserves of raw cotton; it is near the cotton fields of Persia and the oil fields of Azerbaijan; the central government in Moscow does not interfere; and the mill works full capacity and manufactures just one thing—a cheap coarse cotton

sheeting, known as *biaz*, which is the medium of exchange in Dagestan, where Soviet money is not taken. Salaries of officials are paid in *biaz*; food is purchased with *biaz*; and even wives are bought for *biaz*.

I spent two days in Petrovsk, visiting the social institutions and informing myself in a general way about the food conditions in the mountains. My informant and guide was Tovarisch Efrimenko, Commissar of Education and vice-chairman of the Dagestan Committee for Famine Relief. Efrimenko is a young Communist and Chekist who has played a prominent part, and a bloody one, in putting down counter-revolution in different parts of the empire. He puts his whole life and soul into the cause of communism. He is honest, fanatical, and still has enthusiasm—something which his superiors in Moscow have long since lost. His present resources for his important work are limited to several hundred yards of *biaz*, and the money he gets from the lotto gambling-houses, licensed by the Famine Relief, the only sure source of revenue and encouraged by the government.

Efrimenko sighs for the good old days before NEP when he could help himself to anything he needed for his work without bothering to pay for it. My impression is that he is not greatly bothered now, but I am quite certain that he never takes anything for himself.

It had been arranged that I should start for the mountains in the early morning of February 18, in company of Abdulah, liaison officer, Abdulrachman, representative of the Department of Education, and Haji, head bodyguard. Abdulah and I were in a small rubber-tired victoria drawn by three horses driven by Ali Khan, while Abdulrachman and Haji were on a light four-wheeled frame of a wagon (without a box) called *lineika*, driven by Mohammed. Victoria, lineika, horses, drivers, and officers were at one time in the service of the Tsar, and were beginning to look a bit shabby. A picturesque armed and mounted guard followed or preceded us, as the situation demanded, and watched over our safety.



Top: *A native son of Dagestan*
 Bottom: *Dressed in A.R.A. sacks*

Top: *Dagestan warrior and wife*
 Bottom: *A shepherd of the hills*

Abdulah is a young man of about twenty-five, well built, and military looking. He picked up his Russian and his revolutionary ideas in the Shura high school, and in 1917, with other boys, paraded the streets of the then Dagestan capital under the Red banner. He was, of course, drawn into the civil war, where he apparently suffered much, for any mention of another war makes him shout with pain. The last phases of the struggle he fought with the Bolsheviks, and when it was over, he found himself a Communist and an office-holder. He talked intelligently on topics within his range, and had the good taste to keep quiet when one did not wish to be disturbed. He was a likable fellow, did much to make my trip enjoyable, and I feel quite grateful to him.

Abdulrachman came along to inspect the children's homes and to make arrangements for opening feeding stations. He was thirty-two years of age, but looked much older, probably owing to the fact that he had taken the worries of the world on his shoulders. After finishing his education in the Shura high school, he went to the University of Petrograd, where he sipped from various springs of knowledge, and like so many other Russian youths of that pre-war period settled all the world problems and denied all the "conventional" theories and beliefs except pessimism. When in a room, he could not sit still, but had to pace up and down, his hands behind his back, a far-away look in his face, uttering a deep sigh every few minutes. To a direct question, he usually gave an indirect answer, and followed it up with a tale of the wickedness of mankind. His cynicism, pessimism, and talkativeness got on my nerves, but at times when he forgot himself, he was a good companion.

Haji is a Dagestanian peasant from the lowlands, a very decent fellow of whom I became quite fond. He fought with the Reds in the civil war and was decorated with the order of the Red Flag. He was not certain whether he was a Communist or not, and I could not enlighten him on the subject. However, he could get up early in the morning, which neither Abdulah nor Abdulrachman, especially Abdulrachman, could.

Ali Khan and Mohammed were part of the family, ate with us of the same dish, drank out of the same glass, never became familiar, and never abused their horses. These five, each of whom was armed with a rifle, revolver, and *kinzhal* [native dagger], were my daily companions.

The road from Petrovsk to Temir Khan Shura, our immediate destination, was built by the military authorities of the old régime, and though it has received little attention since 1914 is still in fair condition. It is particularly bad, where it should be especially good, on the mountain ridges and passes. After we had crossed the coast range we came into a sunny valley with dry roads, and our horses trotted right along, passing shepherds feeding their flocks, and two-wheeled carts drawn by undersized oxen and guided by men who brought to mind Rumanian peasants. We caught up with a couple of men driving inland from the lowland pastures a bunch of mares and colts, because, they said, a gang of horse-stealing Checheni were out on a raid.

In the afternoon, we went over another ridge and slid into the muddy valley of Temir Khan Shura and into its still muddier town, where it was with difficulty and with rubbers tied to our boots that we made our way about. Temir Khan Shura (now called Buinaksk), being nearer the mountains, higher than Petrovsk (Petrovsk is two meters below sea level, and Shura 475 meters above), and having less malaria, was the capital of Dagestan in the days of the Tsar. It then had many fine buildings, and well-kept streets and parks, but all these are disappearing. The better houses are nationalized and neglected; the poorer are not repaired because of fear that they too will be nationalized; and, as a result, the city is a sad sight. It has eleven children's homes with some 2,000 children, and three hospitals with 130 beds, but neither the homes nor the hospitals have the supplies needed to care for their inmates. Nearly all of the children are from the mountains. Some were brought here and others fled here because of famine and have been picked up in the streets.

In Dagestan there are more than thirty dialects, several of these being represented in each school, and it is not always easy to converse with the little refugees or to get them to converse with each other. But this problem of language is not confined to the children's homes. It is also met with in families and in public gatherings. Russian was and is to a certain extent the official and common language, but it is losing ground under the pressure of nationalism and the general deterioration of the schools.

Three days before we arrived at Shura the storekeepers went on strike because of the high taxes. The town officials tried to arbitrate between them and the representative of the Moscow Commissariat of Finance, but the latter would not budge, insisting that the shopkeepers should first pay and then state their grievances. But the shopkeepers had no faith, and when I again passed through Shura, two weeks later, the strike was still on.

Efrimenko, who had preceded me to Shura in order to guide me about, planned a concert for Monday evening in order to show off his protégés and the "guest from afar" to them. The hall that night was packed with people wearing *shubas* [fur skin coats] and *burkas* [sheepskin capes], almost equally divided between the Moslems who had their fur caps on and the Christians with theirs off. The entertainment was interesting, for it showed how Efrimenko was trying to mould public opinion and to lead the young mind in the way of communism. Every recitation, every song, was a denunciation of the bourgeoisie and a glorification of the proletariat and the Red Army. I could not help but wonder whether these efforts would have any greater success than the inculcation of 100 per cent Americanism and other such propaganda undertakings. Efrimenko, himself, complained that, notwithstanding all the material and moral encouragement given to the Young Communists (the Red Y.M.C.A., as known in A.R.A. circles), they wasted their opportunities, and occasionally he had to take them in hand.

When the vocal part of the program was over the children danced the native dance, the *lezginka*, and did it very well

indeed. Efrimenko brought the performance to a close with a speech, glorifying the Soviet government, praising the efforts of America, which though still a capitalistic land had yet the spirit of the proletariat, referring in complimentary terms to the distinguished visitor, and asking the audience to stand while the military band played the "International" in honor of the United States.

From the concert I was taken, without my guide, to the home of one of the best Moslem families for a cup of tea. I say "best families" because here in primitive Dagestan there are social classes, which are not, however, determined by occupation. Our drivers generally ate at the same table with us, took their turn with the invited guests in dancing the lezginka, and, so far as I could see, were not treated as inferiors because of the kind of work they did. In this respect Dagestan is a perfect democracy. At the same time there are social classes, and social snobbishness, based on birth. The population of Dagestan is divided into clans, and this tie is so strong that the feud is still a recognized institution. But not all the members of the clan are equal. There are usually four social classes: *khan* (or *bek*), *chanki*, *uzdien*, and *koli*. The first is the ruling class, the term "khan" is usually applied to it in the mountains and that of "bek" in the lowlands. In some districts the khans play a very unimportant part, for there is not enough land to support an aristocracy. The mass of the population are uzdiens, and children born from the union of a khan and an uzdien are chanki. Koli are descendants of captives, and have the status of slaves. Koli may not hold office, they may not marry in the class above them, and they may not resent the jeers of the children on the street and the sneers of their parents. In a certain *aul* [native village] where I passed the night, I met an exceedingly intelligent and well-educated man, a former officer in the Tsar's army, a man of some social graces, and I thought he was the host. The next day I learned that he was a koli and could no more aspire to take a wife from the chanki than a beggar could from King George's court.

To return to my tea-party. Around the table were several husbands and wives, all Moslems, but the men were Communists, and the women anti-Communists. Dagestan Communists should not be taken too seriously. When the civil war broke out the Whites charged the Reds with the nationalization of women and other irreligious practices, and the Reds promised to all those who would join their standard the green pastures of the Whites. These lies and promises confused and divided the ignorant population. The women and the more piously inclined men came out on the side of the Whites, while the materially minded and revolutionary spirits sided with the Reds. For two years or more there was a carnival of blood, and when that came to an end the Reds incorporated the leaders of the native bands into the Communist party. To those who could read and write, positions of trust were given in the new capital, Makhach-Kala. To those who could not, a few yards of biaz were presented, with an office in the native village. My hosts at Shura, and many of my other hosts in different parts of Dagestan, belonged to this category of Communists. They reminded me of our newly naturalized citizens who join the Republican party, parade under its banner, repeat its catch words, but who keep their minds, and often their pockets, open to Democratic convictions.

The glass of tea to which I was invited turned out to be a feast of *shashlik*, *pilaf*, and other Caucasian dishes. Between courses we discussed Dagestan affairs, and be it said to the credit of the Dagestan Communists that they are more frank in their opinions than their *tovarischi* in Russia. Their outspokenness became at times so embarrassing that I had to call their attention to the fact that I was not a member of the Red company, but I do not think that it made any impression. They criticized Nicholas' autocracy when they served under it, and with the same naïveté they handled Lenin's dictatorship of the proletariat. They had as little confidence in the one as they had in the other. What they were interested in is money with which to pay the police, because the two benefit concerts given for that pur-

pose were financial failures—money to feed the prisoners who did not bring their own provisions, money for schools, for this, that, and the other, and especially for their own salaries.

Abdulah had been busy all day, Monday, preparing for the mountains. We had agreed to leave at seven in the morning, but it was, of course, an hour and a half later when we got under way. But when we did start, we had a great send-off. It may have been by accident or planned, I do not know which, that a company of Red soldiers, headed by a band, lined up in front of our victoria, and as we got into it, the music struck up, the order to march was shouted, and we, flanked to the right and left by a special mounted guard, fell into the procession and drove through the streets lined with people saluting us.

When we had driven for about an hour, we heard ahead of us rifle shots, and we saw two men with guns charging across the field after something which Abdulah said was a wolf, but our guards who dashed off in the direction of the pursued animal, unslinging their rifles on the run, claimed at first that it was a fox, and later that it was a wildcat. Whatever it was, it got away unharmed.

We jogged along, passing a number of two-wheeled carts loaded with earthenware and fruit on the way to Shura. At noon we halted for a few minutes to give the horses a little hay and to have a bite of corn bread and "Dagestan chocolate," (made of honey, butter, linseed oil, and flour). We were going uphill all the time, and at one place it became so steep that I decided to walk and get the full benefit of the warm sunshine. When I caught up with the party at the top of the hill, I found them engaged in whistling and spitting at the black horse. On inquiring the reason thereof, I was told that the kidneys had not functioned all day, that the animal was in pain, and that one of the accepted treatments was being applied. It did not work, I am sorry to say. Abdulah was a little put out with the drivers for failing to bring with them the claw of a certain bird which, when rubbed over the belly of the horse, always gave relief. Haji inquired whether anybody in the crowd had a double toe,

and looked quite dejected when none of us answered in the affirmative. Fortunately, just then several men, going in the opposite direction, came up, one of whom had the double toe. He got up on the tongue of the lineika behind the horses, applied the double toe between the legs of the animal, and two hours later the trouble was liquidated, and the efficacy of the treatment established beyond a doubt.

Later in the day, one of our guardsmen was sent ahead to notify the inhabitants of the aul Levashi of our coming, and when we drove in about six o'clock the people were lined up to greet us, and the host of the evening welcomed us and led us to his home.

Dagestan mountain auls are very picturesque, situated as they are on the crest of the mountain or in some pocket equally difficult to attack and easy to defend. They are constructed of adobe or rock, the materials near at hand, and look so much like the landscape about them that at times one has to look twice to make sure of his sight. The houses are close together, and the streets are usually so narrow that the healing mountain sun and air have no chance to get in to dry up the wet and smelly spots. Those living in the highest places can, from their house-tops, look down on all their neighbors below and see what they do and what they have. Each home has its own courtyard, about fifty feet square, which is closed and locked at night. The house is generally of two stories, the lower one for the animals, grain, and hay, and the upper one for the family. The rooms are clean, generally whitewashed, the walls covered with home-made rugs, copper pans, old family heirlooms, and the mantel-pieces decorated with bits of china and such things. In the better homes there are a bed, a table, and some chairs in the room. Most of this furniture is Russian. Many of the rooms have open fireplaces but without a grate; others have small sheet-iron stoves. The roof, being flat, is used as a fuel yard, especially for dried manure-cakes, as a place for the men to sun themselves in the morning, and occasionally for dances in the evening.

As soon as we had cleaned up a bit, we went to inspect the children's home and the hospital. The former was dark, because there were neither lamps nor candles, and after we had groped our way, following the noise, we discovered, with the aid of a match, a room full of dirty, half-clad children on the floor trying to eat their watery cornmeal soup. They had little personal care; and the farther we went into the mountains, the less attention did the children receive, for there was no one to care for them. The more or less educated Russians, for one reason or another, have been obliged to leave the country, and the native Communists and Knights of the Red Flag selected to take their places were ignorant and, what was worse, unpaid. After keeping the job a few days or a few weeks, the supervisor departed, handing his duties over to the cook or the watchman.

What is said of the children's homes is equally true of the schools. The teachers are supposed to receive the equivalent of one dollar a month in Soviet rubles, but are seldom paid on time and during the interval the value of the Soviet paper currency falls so that it is impossible for them to buy enough bread to last a few days. On this trip, Abdurachman paid off the teachers, giving them (in February) their October salary of eight million rubles, the price of one *arshin* [27 inches] of biaz. Bread rations were not given.

From the children's home we walked over to the hospital, where no light was to be seen. With the aid of a match, we looked into one empty room after another on the ground floor, then climbed the broken stairs to where we came upon four people, the medical personnel, gathered around the fire. The most important member, the doctor, was not there, for he, like the teacher, is always on the run in order to find something to eat. These four were using up the medical stores and refused admission to sick people who did not bring with them their own provisions. There was but one patient in the building, and he had brought his own food and his wife to prepare it for him and probably to take care of him. We were taken in charge by the "felsher," a native of the village who had had a six months'

short course in medicine and pharmacy in the Shura hospital. He claimed to know all the Latin medical terms and to be able to read any prescription in that tongue, but when I asked what antiseptics he had, he could not tell. There were few drugs in the place, but when I inquired what he needed he replied that he had everything. The true reason for his answer was, no doubt, his ignorance. Many of the natives were suffering from skin diseases, but had little recourse to the medical personnel because they did not trust them and because they had not the means to pay for drugs which they were supposed to receive free of charge.

When we had returned to our temporary home, our host (now a member of the Dagestan Central Executive Committee but formerly cook in a Russian family) had a delicious supper which did honor to his early training. He was proud to have us as his guests, and, as is the custom of the country, he himself waited on us and welcomed the opportunity to do us honor and to make us comfortable. After supper, he brought in a large pitcher of *buzza*, a drink made of barley, and in its wake came up the musicians; and before I knew it the head of the ispolkom (the most important person in the district), formerly a country school-teacher, was dancing the lezginka. Owing to these festivities, we did not retire until late.

In the morning (February 21) I took a walk around the aul and on returning I was astonished to find a young woman waiting to speak with me privately. She told me, in broken Russian, that she was a Communist and had been sent here from the Tartar Republic to work among the "benighted" women of Dagestan. At first the Party gave her *manufaktury* [bias] to distribute, and in this way she had gathered a number of women about her; but since the supply of *manufaktury* had been cut off, the new converts had backslidden. Would I supply her with *manufaktury* and other things? That the preachers of the new gospel are having hard times I am certain. Another propagandist whom I met in Shura related to me some of his troubles. In 1920 he had been supplied with the material things

needed to win the natives, but even then he had had some sad experiences. One day as he was holding forth most eloquently before a large crowd on the falseness of religion the call of the *mullah* [priest] was heard and his audience left him to pray. "Now," he added, "I cannot even get them out, for in answer to my invitation they say 'give manufactory, and we will come.'" It is not the first time in history that converts were made with manufactory.

We drove out of Levashi about nine o'clock, preceded by two wild-looking mounted guards and accompanied (for a considerable distance) by the host and the chairman of the ispolkom. The country we passed through was hilly, rocky, and sandy. There was hardly any arable level land. Dagestan mountains have no valleys, only ravines and gorges that are as dry in February as our Southwest is in July. The poor natives have searched the mountain sides and here and there have located strips of land lending themselves to cultivation, and to these they have carried soil from other parts, have terraced and benched, and have planted in each a few fruit trees and thirty or forty hills of corn. Some of these plots are so small that one can appreciate the Dagestan joke about the man who on coming to his field took off his sheepskin coat to go to work, and then could not find the patch because it was covered by the sheepskin.

The mountain population of Dagestan was never able, not even in the best days, to raise more than a third or a fourth of the food needed. What was lacking was obtained in exchange for fruit, for home industries, and for work in neighboring parts of Russia during the harvest season. But the war has thoroughly disorganized this primitive economic and social system. In some respects, the civil struggle was more bloody in Dagestan than in many other parts of Russia, for here a religious element was added to the strife. As a result of this carnage, the young and vigorous male population has greatly decreased and the number of widows and orphans greatly increased, the amount of live stock has been reduced by half and the seeded area by two-thirds. Home industries no longer exist because there is no

raw material (wool, etc.), and no market. There is nowhere to go for employment, and it is not even safe to take the few boxes of fruit to the corn-belt to be exchanged because of the robbers that lie in wait.

Primitive as was the life of these people before the war, it is infinitely more so now. In the pre-revolutionary days most of the auls had trading places where things were bought and sold in the currency of the empire, but now one rarely finds a store and the Soviet ruble is unknown and unseen. The only medium of exchange is the coarse biaz, already mentioned, and used for making shirts and skirts to protect the body from the hair of the sheepskin burkas. All other clothing and shoes are homemade. In some villages, I have seen fire produced with steel and flint, houses lighted with pine knots, fields scratched over with wooden plows of the most primitive type, and tools of the stone age. This brief description gives the cause for the famine and explains the situation.

In the afternoon of February 21 the scenery became grander and wilder, and at times I thought I was driving up and down the Grand Canyon. We were following the military road to Gunib, an excellent piece of engineering, which in any other country would remain for years to come as a monument to the men who built it but which here is gradually going to pieces for lack of upkeep. We passed close to famous Georgievski Bridge, where many noted battles were fought between the invading Russians and the Dagestanians, and where during the civil war about one hundred White officers were made to jump to certain death below.

We reached Gunib, the birthplace of Abdulah, about four o'clock, and went to the home of his father, who unfortunately was away. In his absence Abdulah acted as host and made me welcome. His mother and sister were at home, but he, the son, though married and having a home of his own, was master. Be it said to his credit, however, there was nothing of the tyrant in Abdulah.

Gunib is noted for its strong military fortress, for its historic

importance, and for its wonderful scenery. I visited the fortress, which is now falling to pieces, having been first plundered and smashed by the natives when the Tsar's garrison abandoned it in 1917, and is now being destroyed by the Red guard. Many years ago trees were planted for beauty and shade, but these are being cut down by the soldiers for firewood and thrown down the mountain side where they strike the narrow zigzag road and cut out big chunks along its edge. I asked the commandant why the roads were not being taken care of better and he replied that it was none of his business but that of the Commissariat of Communication. It was at Gunib that Shamil, the great national hero of Dagestan, after having defied the Russians for more than twenty-five years, finally surrendered in 1859 to Prince Bariatinski. I made a special pilgrimage to the historic spot and am sorry to say that the monument erected to commemorate the event is not taken care of any better than the statue to Bariatinski, which was lying on its back without its head in the backyard of a children's home in Shura. Gunib is almost eight thousand feet high, and from the Abdulah home, on the side of the mountain, one gets a splendid view of the canyon below and of the towering heights above. The nights are clear, the sky lighted with sparkling stars, the air full of the music of running waters, and the days sunshiny, invigorating, and glorious. When I commented on the beauty of the scene, the natives said: "Oh, but you should see it in the summer!" For me it is difficult to imagine that the summer can improve it much.

We spent three very profitable and enjoyable days in this region, and this gave me the opportunity to learn many useful things. One of the interesting men was the judge of the place, who had at one time studied at Kiev. He said it was quite impossible for him to act according to the Soviet decrees, because in the first place many of them never reached him, and, in the second, those that came to hand were too far removed from actual life. In order to make any headway at all he had to have recourse to the Tsar's code and to local custom, but this procedure exposed him to the charge of counter-revolution. In

some parts of Dagestan, he assured me, the ordeal is still practiced. According to the law he is supposed to be assisted by several men, but as there is no pay for them and only much trouble, they refuse to help. What to do with the people in jail worries the judge, as it does the other officials; for there is no food for them, and it is a question of letting them starve or letting them out. If he does the one, his conscience bothers him; if he does the other, the Communists worry him. While we were talking, several women were brought in from a neighboring village to be locked up because their husbands were highway robbers and could not be caught. "What shall I do with them?" he inquired, and answering that question was like trying to get out of a vicious circle.

Friday, February 23, was a double holiday: the Moslem day of rest and the Fifth Anniversary of the Red Army. In the morning there was a military parade in which the small garrison and the tots from the children's home, commanded by their teachers, participated, took the oath of allegiance, listened to speeches, and cheered. From the neighboring auls, there came many representatives dressed in sheepskin coats and hats and smoking "Shamil" tobacco rolled in cornhusks. At noon there was an uphill race of four versts between four small ponies; according to the timekeepers, the winner covered the distance in eight minutes. The spectators sat on the rocks along the mountain side and watched the bareback riders and heard their shouts of encouragement. There was little boisterous excitement manifested, not even when the owner of the winner was presented with the prize—an old revolver. The real excitement came when two shepherds, one playing a small, wooden, homemade, musical pipe and the other a drum, struck up the lezginka and the dancing began. First one man and then another, with large and small boys between, jumped into the ring and began to show off. The crowd clapped hands and shouted and everybody was happy. One event, however, did not come off as expected. The soldiers had fixed up two scarecrows, called one Religion and the other Capitalism, and filled them with

powder with the idea of making an end of them. But for some reason or other they would not be blown up and these two, religion and capitalism, still stand in the way of the Bolshevik progress.

During my stay at Gunib, I was invited one day to have a cup of tea (made of dried pumpkin rind or some other substitute) in a certain home where there were present three men and two women, more intelligent, on the whole, than the average Dagestanian. We got into a friendly conversation and asked each other questions.

"Do you like the Soviet government?" I inquired.

"We like the Soviet, but we do not like the Communists because they attack religion and private property," was the reply.

"Why do you like the Soviet?"

"Because it took the land from the rich and gave it to the poor [nationalization]. Before the Soviet all the pasturage along the Caspian Sea was in the hands of three men who made us pay for the use of it. The Soviet took it away from them."

"Can you pasture on it now free of cost?"

"Oh, no. It costs more."

"What did you gain by this change?"

"We gained nothing."

They turned the tables and gave me a lot of questions:

"Is there a Tsar in America? an army?"

"Does America like the fish and kerosene she gets from Dagestan in exchange for the relief the A.R.A. sends?"

"Why does the Soviet government have so much trouble while other countries live in peace?"

"If communism is good why do not the other nations take it up? If it is not good why do they not suppress it?"

"Will communism in Dagestan supply the people with food and clothing as in the days of the Tsar?"

"Do the men in America work in the fields like women?"

"Does America build high buildings because it is a small country?"

"How long would it take to go to America on horseback?"

On Friday, February 23, in the afternoon, a party of five of us started on horseback for Chokh, about twelve miles away. The trail took us through a rough country, but these mountains seemed to have more soil on them than some others we had seen, and, judging from the almost inaccessible locations of the spadable patches, every bit of the soil was in use. Chokh has the reputation of being one of the richest auls in Dagestan and its inhabitants are famed for their industry. They tell you that; they tell you also that they are leaders in culture. I remember a most interesting argument between Abdulrachman, who is from Kazikumukh, and a scholar of Chokh, as to the contribution of their respective auls to the culture of Dagestan.

We were taken to the residence of a relative of Abdulah, a fine old building, with good rugs, a valuable collection of Dagestan weapons and many other interesting objects. At this home I had an opportunity to see Dagestan hospitality at its best, for I was an "honored kunak."

The word *kunak* means both guest and host and is a sacred institution. Every Dagestanian has a kunak in every village and stays with him when he visits that place. Some of these kunakships are handed down from father to son, from one generation to another. On coming to the aul the visitor goes to the home of the kunak and hands over the weapons and by so doing places himself under his protection, and this trust is never misplaced. This hospitality and protection is extended to strangers who seek it, and even to enemies who ask it. I was told of a man who had killed another of a very powerful *tukhum* [clan] and, knowing that the clansmen would soon be on his trail, fled to the home of the slain, where he gave his bloody kinzhal to the widow and demanded her protection. She held the avengers back until the Tsar's police came and led him out. After that she tried to stab him.

To protect the kunak is not enough. He must be entertained; he must be made happy; and be it said to the honor of the Dagestanians they are admirable hosts. As soon as the

kunak arrives, the host and other male members of the family (for the duty of hospitality extends to the family and the clan) help him alight, dust his clothes, take off his shoes, pour water on his hands, place the guest room at his disposal, and set before him the best food. The host himself waits on him, and though he is coaxed to eat he is not urged to eat and drink more than is good for him. If the guest is from afar, or a person of more or less importance, the host gives a special party in his honor.

We had not been in Chokh more than half an hour before the members of the clan and other noted Chokhians called to greet us. In their wake slipped in the musicians with the *chun-gur*, a four-stringed instrument like a mandolin in shape, the *khumuz* (three strings), and tambourine. A little later the women sneaked in and squatted down in one corner, and all was ready for the dance, the joy-giver of Dagestan which overcomes hunger and weariness. Generally the host opens the dance and is followed by the other male members of the family in accordance with their age and rank. As a rule, only married women appear, but when it is a strictly family party, as at Chokh, the single women also participate. In most places of Dagestan that I have visited, the men dance in their sheepskin shubas and caps and when they make their lightning turns the skirts of their coats swing open and display the kinzhal and other warlike weapons. At Chokh, being a cultural center rivaling Kazikumukh, the men left their shubas outside and appeared in their *cherkaskis*, in the Russian style—shirts outside the trousers, tucked into a pair of light boots. The women had on their best dresses and trousers, which showed about two inches below the skirt, such rings, coins, and belts as they had, and always a large shawl, which got in their way, covering their heads and shoulders, but not their faces.

To dance the lezginka, a circle with a diameter of four or five feet is quite sufficient. When the music strikes up the man jumps into the ring and after making a round or two begins to kick up his heels, but before he really warms up one of the women joins him. The conventional pose is for the man to

have his right hand over his breast and the left behind him, while the woman keeps the left hand near her face and the right by her side. Chokh being an orthodox place little contaminated by foreign influence, the woman never looks up; her face is always expressionless and her movements stiff. The man and woman dance around each other, but she always dances away from him, and when he faces one way she turns the other so that he may not get too close to her. In some auls, the woman must not stop until the man has left the ring, for she merely dances to set him off. The man shines, swells, and lets himself go to exhibit his skill. The by-standers make a lusty noise, clap their hands, and keep time to the music. I suppose this dance symbolizes wife-capture, but no one seems to know its history or its significance. Each couple performs three or four minutes, but the music runs on until all the men have had a chance to dance once and each woman more than once, for there are fewer of them present. When the dancing is over the singing begins. Love and war are the inspiring themes. The man, when he sings, walks up and down or stands and accompanies himself with a tambourine or drum; the women sit on the floor and keep time to the sound of a drum or big copper pan. The monotony of the tones and the shrillness of the voices recalled to me songs I had heard in the Far East, and gave some idea of the music made in Attila's camp. Pitchers of buza and bottles of moonshine, made of fruit, were on the table to keep the inward fires burning and to moisten the throats. Dancing and singing were alternately indulged in, and in this way the evening was passed.

At Chokh there were several different ways in which the lezginka was danced. In addition to the one already described there was another in which, while the man and woman were going full swing, the music came to a sudden stop, and, by the rule of the game, the dancers had to stand on one foot as long as the music was silent. If they failed the *tamada*, or master of ceremonies, was on hand with a stick to hit the sinning member.

There was still another variation which was deeply impressed on me. The man enters the ring and after a few turns throws

the whip in his hand to a woman, who is obliged to step out and dance or be whipped. She takes the whip and throws it at another man, who relieves the man who called her out; and this goes on and on until all have danced and some more than once. I was deeply interested in watching the performance, when one of the demure women in passing near me threw me the whip and the house shouted. There was nothing for me to do but to step out and keep her company. After I had made a few jumps I cast my weapon at the feet of the woman nearest me hoping that she would soon call out another man, but I was mistaken. She either enjoyed my company, or my misery, for she kept me hopping for what seemed to me a long time before she got me a relief. The audience was pleased. Next day, when I returned to Gunib, I was surprised to know that the news of my night's adventure had preceded me. Abdulah's sister said that the people were greatly pleased that I had danced and that had I refused to do so, they would have concluded that I was an important person. Was she paying me a compliment or not? What she meant to say was that if I had refused to dance they would have thought that I considered myself too good for them.

While I am on the subject of women I might as well go on. Theoretically, the man is the master and the woman the slave, but this statement is no more true of Dagestan than of Europe. To be sure, the man has the leading part and the last word on the subject, but the woman is not a mere thing. She has her rights, which are protected by law and custom. As the daughter she inherits one-third as against the two-thirds of the son, but she has in addition the marriage portion set aside for her by her husband on the wedding-day and the gifts from her mother and friends. Neither is it true that the women do all the work and the men lie around. Here, as elsewhere, there is a division of labor, the woman doing most of the drudgery and the man the running around, but he carries his load. Polygamy is practiced, but the getting of a wife is not as simple a matter as in Europe, for she has to be paid for in one way or another.

Young men and young women are not supposed to meet,

least of all to look on one another, and never to speak; but as a matter of fact in Dagestan, as elsewhere, they do all three. When a man wishes to marry a girl he sends a go-between, a married woman, to the girl to inquire if she is willing. The next step is to make a proposal to the father, which must be accompanied by substantial presents. The father names his price, and if the lover and his kinsmen cannot pay it the girl goes to the next highest bidder. For a year, more or less, the young man and his relatives court, with presents, the father and the family of the girl before the final consent is secured.

If the girl is willing and the father opposed, she may allow herself to be kidnaped, and this wife-stealing is quite common. Abdulah had a stolen wife and the son of my Chokh host showed me his recent captive, who was fair to look upon. According to an old custom a girl cannot marry without the consent of the father; but the Russian law, of which many couples take advantage, has softened this by authorizing those in authority to perform the ceremony, provided the two are of the same social class, and Soviet decrees have gone even beyond that. Nevertheless custom is stronger than the law, and the consent of the father and the clan is still important and the relatives of the legally married couple take it upon themselves to bring him round. He generally yields, if the price is big enough.

Here, as elsewhere, the girl who makes advances and proposes to a man takes quite a chance, but it happens here also. If she is unsuccessful and her advances become known, the parents of the girl chase her out of the home and heap all kinds of insults upon her. Her brothers may even kill her. Custom, in this case, is more kind than law, for it demands that the man marry the woman and live with her at least three months and save her social status. After that he may divorce her, but he may also take advantage of the law and refuse to marry her.

The wedding ceremony and feast are in the home of the groom and at his expense. If he has not the means, it is up to his relatives to uphold the honor of the clan. The bride, accom-

panied by her best married-woman friend and preceded by lighted candles and a mirror, is taken, with her face covered, to her future home, in front of which a fire is burning. She enters the place, with her face still covered, and takes a seat on the floor. The mother of the groom meets her and inquires the price she must pay for the pleasure of looking on the face of her new daughter-in-law. The friend then dwells on the chastity and beauty of the bride and names a high price. The mother sets off the virtues and valor of her son and offers a lower price. The bargaining continues until a cow or some other useful object is offered and accepted and the veil is lifted.

When the mother has had her wish granted, the other women relatives of the groom bargain in their turn and there is great rivalry. The question of what to give as a present is very important. One relative tries to outdo the other, with the result that for days before the wedding there is much mystery.

The turn of the men comes on the second day, the day of the dance, and each man who dances his round with the bride makes her a present. Between the dances there are songs, many of them in praise of the bride. At midnight the couple retire and the guests wait outside. If the bride is as virtuous as her relatives have claimed, the groom throws out of the window some visible evidence of it and her friends shout with joy. If she is not, he may kick her out of doors, and her kin depart in shame and sorrow. Her life is not worth much after that, for, if her brothers do not beat her to death, she becomes an outcast.

As a rule, the Dagestanians have large families, and I have heard of one woman who had twenty children, only seven of whom survived. Abdulah's mother gave birth to fourteen, but only five are alive today. I have been told of cases where the women have tried to limit the birth-rate by artificial means but, because of their ignorance, the results were fatal. What a splendid field for the Birth Control Society!

When I got up Saturday morning, the sun was already shining and my kunak led me to the roof of the house to sun myself. From there I had a grand view. Of the many picturesque auls

of Dagestan, Chokh is one of the most noteworthy. It is situated on the very crest of a high ridge, protected on the right and left by two other ridges, even higher. Below me, in the distance, were ravines, mountain trails, frozen streams, patches of cultivated land, and here and there an aul in the fastnesses of the rocks. From where I stood, I could look down into my neighbor's yard and on the top of his house, and see manure-cakes, bundles of wood, girls making butter by shaking an earthen jar from side to side, men sunning themselves, women driving cows and donkeys, and carrying heavy water jars and other loads on their backs. As the morning advanced, the school children lined up and marched to school singing their songs. It was a beautiful morning and a beautiful view that I shall always remember.

While we were eating breakfast, we heard and saw the public crier standing on the hillside close to the cemetery calling the people to a meeting. The call, which could be heard a long distance, was repeated several times, and pretty soon the crowd began to gather. Much to my surprise, a delegation came to invite us to the meeting, and later I learned that it was called especially for our benefit. When I reached the assembly place, I found a large number of men dressed in heavy sheepskin coats with sleeves that reached down to their ankles and big sheepskin caps which made some of them look like big rams. As the day was warm, the odor of the assembly was distinctly sheepy. The spokesman of the aul painted a gloomy economic picture and asked Abdulah, representing the government, to say when the Soviet would keep its promise and help. Abdulah made them a long speech giving them more promises, which he knew could only be fulfilled in part, or not at all. My turn came next, and I was told how the economic situation had gone from bad to worse, of the scarcity of good land, the crop failure because of lack of water, the efforts of the villagers to dig an irrigation canal, and the unfulfilled promises of the government to send an engineer, powder, and tools.

I pleaded that these were questions that I had no right to

take up with them, since I was here only as a representative of the A.R.A. to investigate their needs for the purpose of determining how that organization could help them. But neither to the Chokhians nor to the other Dagestanians could I get that idea across. To them I was a person of importance, who had come from Moscow, and, therefore, I had influence with the powers that be. They pleaded that I should tell somebody in Moscow of their plight. I tried once more to make it clear to them, so as not to mislead them and give them false hopes, that I was not a Soviet official, not even a Communist; but all these words meant nothing to them. They insisted that I was modest and begged me to help them and assured me that I would after I had seen their canal. In order to satisfy them, I consented to go with them to the irrigation works.

We mounted our ponies and after an hour's difficult climb stood on the top of a ridge, from which we had a grand view of the mountains for miles and miles. One of the men took me in charge and explained the works. He pointed out a small stream in the distance, the course of which the Chokhians propose to divert in an opposite direction so as to make it fall over the ridge into a canal two hundred feet or more below, which would take it for eight miles along the mountain side and then let it run down first on the orchards and vineyards of the hillside and then on the corn fields in the small valley below. As I looked over the landscape I was greatly impressed with the difficult piece of engineering work, and yet not an engineer had been there. After many urgent requests a student had been sent from Moscow, who condemned what had already been done and then went back to his studies. The Chokhians started anew and, with no other tools than a few picks and shovels, have, during the last six months, made eight and one-half versts of canal (four more to go). They have drilled several tunnels, the longest being seventy feet. In order to get out the dirt (in sheepskin bags—all they have) they have been obliged to bore down two forty-foot shafts to the tunnel below.

I admired the pluck and perseverance of these poor people

and felt sorry for them. They are a little in doubt, and I am greatly so, whether or not all their efforts will lead to anything. The water is still a long way from the tunnels, and it is a question whether it can be made to flow in the desired direction, whether the sandy tunnels will stand the pressure, whether the fall will hit the canal below, and whether the water will follow the canal or go its own way. It is no wonder that they are discouraged.

We returned to Gunib late Saturday afternoon and spent a pleasant evening with the mother, sister, and other members of the Abdulah family. When we were about to retire, one of the dogs began to bay at the moon, which made Abdulah quite nervous. "I do not like it; it bodes no good," he exclaimed.

Sure enough, the next day, February 25, was the most trying of our travels. We had a long day's ride to Khunzakh over two steep mountain ridges and, as usual, we started late. The poor children from the children's home were dragged out to stand in line with the local Communist club to do me honor, thinking all the time that I was an important tovarisch from Moscow, notwithstanding all my efforts to convince them to the contrary. We retraced our steps as far as the Georgievski Bridge, which we crossed, and then started to climb ridge No. 1. When we reached its summit, our trail was crossed by a lumber train of six women, each having two good-sized logs on her back, which was also an ill omen. Half an hour later the lineika broke down, and it took more than an hour to repair it. We proceeded again, passing an abandoned Russian fort alongside a swift-flowing stream full of wild ducks. As we went on, one of the horses sickened and had to be unhitched, but he grew rapidly worse and fell. It seemed as if he would never get up again; but Haji, who is an authority on horse diseases, pierced his nostrils with an awl until they bled, and then all together we pulled and kicked the horse until he got up again. Mohammed led him off and we followed until we came to a native village where a medical consultation was held with the local doctors. It was agreed that the horse was constipated, and one of the

medicos, a big, strapping, savage-looking individual, pulled off his shuba, and twice in succession inserted his arm up to the elbow in the vent of the animal. I doubt whether it felt the pain, for its eyes were glassy and it made no noise, but it had reached the end of its suffering and, in spite of the efforts of the mob to keep it on its feet, it fell down and had spasms. There was much chattering, shouting, and reaching out to grab a leg or a foot, until finally someone cut the animal's throat with a kinzhal and all was over. Five minutes later, a dozen men were skinning it, and the women were preparing the pots for supper. Ali Khan, who stood by near me, and was quite broken up because of the loss of the horse entrusted to him, said, "Watch the way the mouths of these wolves water." I was glad when we drove away from this bloody scene and from the company of these wild men.

These misfortunes spoiled what might otherwise have been a happy day. The sun was warm and agreeable, the mountains glorious and lofty, the air clear, the sky blue, and there was a wildness and primitiveness which was altogether inspiring. We continued to mount higher and higher, passing the thin timber and snow lines until we finally reached the summit about seven-thirty in the evening. The night was cold and clear and all was quiet except for what Ali Khan called "the shout of joy of the hyenas feeding on the flesh of my horse." Our horses were completely exhausted, so that we made our way down grade rather slowly and did not reach Khunzakh before ten o'clock, when the village was already asleep. After a little difficulty, we found the home of the head of the local government, who took us in and cared for us.

During the first week that I spent in Dagestan, a number of questions about America had been put to me, but many of them were so nearly alike that I became a bit suspicious. When in the middle of the day I was asked, "What time is it now in America?" and I said, "About midnight," a knowing look seemed to pass among the auditors. I was convinced that the Dagestanians had some queer notions about America, and made

up my mind to investigate. The night we arrived at Khunzakh, I inquired if I might be given an opportunity to talk with the old and learned men of the community. Next morning there was brought to me an old man who could barely walk, whose eyesight was almost gone, and whose hearing was very defective. I asked his age, and he said, "I was fifty-six at the time of Shamil," an answer very characteristic of the old people of Dagestan. Now Shamil laid down his arms and was taken to Russia in 1859; which makes my visitor nearly one hundred twenty years of age. In any case he was very old, and I should like to add that old people are not rare in Dagestan, and though feeble in body, they have minds as clear as those of their sons.

My Khunzakh sage had theories of his own as to the origin of his people, which I need not relate here. He was quite certain that the misery of today was due to the fact that people lust for wealth and power, which was not true in his young days. I gave him greetings in behalf of the old men of America, which pleased him very much, and he asked me to thank them for thinking of the poor and suffering in Dagestan. To my inquiry as to his ideas about America, he replied that he had always heard that America is the lower world (that is, under Dagestan), that it was inhabited by wild men until the French came, and that now it is a rich land.

"Is America far from Dagestan?" I asked.

"So far," he answered, "that no man can go there."

"But I am here," I said.

"Yes, I see. I suppose there must be a hole in the ground."

After this conversation, I talked with other Dagestanians about America, and their conceptions of our land are something like this. America is the lower world, being under Dagestan, and consequently has not the benefit of the sun and is very dark. Americans work hard and plow their fields with oxen which have candles in their horns. It is a land of gold, silver, and precious stones; its people are good and help the poor everywhere. Some said that the "Tsar of Moscow" had a ladder by means of which one could climb down to America,

while others insisted that it was too far away to reach. In one village there was a discussion as to how the Americans walked, in view of the fact that they lived, as it were, on the ceiling, and one wise old man solved the problem by calling attention to the way of the fly. When I learned all that the Dagestanians thought of America, it became clear to me why I was an honored guest, and why I was almost as much of a curiosity to them as the first Europeans were to the Indians.

In the course of the morning, I visited the Moslem school and the children's home, and found them no better than the average. I had a long talk with the head of the ispolkom, a former clerk in the Tsar's service, and now the master of men. He owed his promotion to his valorous deeds in the Bolshevik army, in reward for which he had been made a Knight of the Red Flag, taken into the party, and given this office. "When I worked for the Tsar," he said, "I earned thirty rubles a month, of which I saved twenty. Now I make two hundred forty millions and save it all because nobody in Khunzakh will take it and it costs too much to go to Shura to spend it."

Khunzakh, high up in the mountains (nearly 5,500 feet), has always been a noted place. In the days of heathendom, it was a center of Islam; later it played an important part as a khanate; and in the Russian period it became a strategic military post. During the recent civil war hundreds of men lost their lives in and outside of the fortress, and Vice-President Samurski, who was one of its defenders, was still suffering from the effects of scurvy which had laid him low in 1920. Many of the auls in this neighborhood had been destroyed; more than fifty per cent of the live stock had been butchered, and half of the tillable land had been abandoned to the ground squirrels and other pests that ate up what was planted on the other half.

I visited the aul Genschutl and learned that out of the two hundred families who had lived there in 1914, only a mere handful of old men and women survived to care for more than a hundred little orphans. Some of these men and women dared not come out on the street, because they had no clothes, and

they will probably remain in their holes until death relieves them of the sense of shame. The head of the Khunzakh government assured me that in view of the nakedness of so many men and women, he had issued an order about a year before that no man should appear on the street before noon and no woman after that hour. Small naked children were seen on the streets, and I also saw one man, sick and naked, in his empty hut; so there was no reason to doubt the report that there were many women in the same state of nature. A few yards of calico or biaz would have done wonders and saved many from a shameful and painful death. Some of the inhabitants had died from hunger and from eating poisonous grasses, and the surviving population was reduced to a diet of boiled cornstalks. The year before, a certain amount of the corn which was brought from America by the A.R.A. reached this locality and gave a good crop, but all this grain had already been consumed. For this spring's planting, there was no seed, and even if the government had kept its promise to supply seed, there were not enough animals to haul it from Shura. In exchange for some of the village land, the community had acquired ten cows and five oxen, and these, with half a dozen donkeys, comprised the live stock of the aul. Two of these oxen almost exhausted themselves by dragging a threshing machine constructed of two heavy boards, the under side of which had slits with small stones in them, over a few bundles of barley. When that grain was gone, we trust that Allah was merciful to them.

When I returned to Khunzakh late in the afternoon, the teacher of the school asked me to make a pilgrimage with him to the graves of the first missionaries, the sites of former mosques, and the scenes of old battlefields. We wandered to the edge of the village to view the noted Khunzakh Falls and the beautiful valley to the south. Much as I should have liked to do so, I could not accept his hospitable invitation to a banquet, because I was not equal to it physically and he financially, and because I was eager to get my company to bed on time so as to have an early start next morning.

Because the road between Khunzakh and Botlikh is in spots difficult and rough, we concluded to leave the wobbly victoria and go, the four of us with Mohammed as driver, in the lineika. We set out late Tuesday morning, February 27, accompanied for several miles by our host, and then were handed over to the guardianship of his mounted police.

The day's travel was like that of the preceding day—a case of climbing up a ridge, getting from the summit a wonderful view of picturesque auls, bits of table land, terraces, orchards, and here and there flocks of sheep, and then going down again. Toward five o'clock we crossed the Andiiski Koisu, which separates Avarski Okrug from Andiiski, and drove to the village Tokh. None of the party had a kunak in this place, but on inquiry it was discovered that one old man knew the grandfather of Abdulah. "If I do not provide for you," said the patriarch to Abdulah, "for whom shall I provide?" He led us to his home, placed his best room at our disposal, and brought us nuts and fruit, the principal crops of the village.

Tokh is poor and backward, and Mohammed said he did not think much of their manners when the mob gathered to stare at "the man from the lower world." The deeds of the Bolsheviks, during the civil war, have put fear into the hearts of the Tokhians, for the host assured me that in his aul Mensheviks were never admitted, but *Krasni Armeets* on showing their *dokumenti* were well taken care of. I doubt whether there was a single person in the village who could read "dokumenti." I asked the old man if he was a Communist, but he did not know what it meant.

"Are you a Bolshevik?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "we are all Bolsheviks. We are all poor. The Mensheviks are rich."

There was no bread in the village, but the old man managed to lay his hands on a piece of mutton and made us a real Dagestan supper. The average Dagestanian eats but twice a day, morning and evening. As most of them are poor, they seldom taste meat, and the principal diet is cornmeal or dishes

made from it. The corn is usually parched before it is ground, as it mills better and keeps better. In traveling the rider carries a sack of meal and, when hungry, pours water (hot if he can get it) over it and dines. This dish is called *tekh*. The national dish par excellence is *hinkal*, cornmeal cakes boiled in water. (If there is meat to be put in, so much the better.) When done the cakes are taken out and the water is then spiced strongly with garlic and served as soup, *cherpa*, and eaten with the *hinkal*. This was the kind of supper that we had.

Abdulah, learning in the course of the evening that the road ahead of us was blocked by falling rocks, called out the local authorities and ordered them to put a gang of men to work to clear the way. This they promised, but in the morning, when we were ready to start, not a person had stirred. There were the usual discussions and threats, which ended in Abdulah's producing a few yards of biaz and the men picking up their shovels. We followed them and with their aid got by, and followed for several hours an alkali river bed between sandy hills and bare mountains.

About noon, February 28, just as we had reached the top of the last ridge, we saw a troop of mounted men charging toward us to the sound of a shepherd's pipe and a drum. The lineika stopped, my men got off, and I also, not knowing whether it was a war band or a wedding party. It proved to be nothing more than the Botlikh reception committee, a little the worse for drink, to welcome the "American from the lower world."

After shaking hands, the committee lined up, two by two, and for about two miles preceded me as a guard of honor, giving me the benefit of their fine horsemanship, weird music, and choking dust. Botlikh was out in force. The tops of the houses were crowded with women, who made a pretense at covering their faces; the streets were lined with men, who stared and bowed; and I doubt whether the freaks of Barnum and Bailey were eyed with more curiosity than the man "from the land of gold, silver, and precious stones." After winding and

winding through the muddy streets, followed by the small boys of the village, we brought up in front of a house, the home of our kunak.

Botlikh is the farthest important western outpost of Dagestan. Wild as was the country and crude as were the people I had passed, the land beyond Botlikh was still wilder and the natives cruder. The Botlikhians, themselves, formed the connecting link and were happy-go-lucky and irresponsible. They could fight, drink, and dance better than other Dagestanians whom I had seen, but they lacked the good-breeding of their neighbors whom we had visited.

At Chokh one felt as if the party were given in honor of the guest. At Botlikh it seemed as if the gathering were merely an excuse for drinking and dancing. At Chokh those who were not invited were too proud to force themselves on the company. At Botlikh the men kept on their sheepskins and the women their calicoes. (It may be that they had nothing better.) But when it came to dancing the small Chokh women were clodhoppers alongside their larger, light-footed, Botlikh sisters.

I spent three nights at Botlikh and attended three dances, of which the last one, a wedding affair, was the best. The room at the home of the groom's people, to which we were taken, was not more than twenty feet square, and on one side of it was a table with plenty of good things to eat and drink. There were about twenty guests, in charge of a *tamada* [master of ceremonies] for the evening, who drank the health of the groom, the bride, the honored guests, the Soviet, the United States, et cetera; and by the time the round was made the poetic muse was upon us and we sang of wars and battles, of the famous deeds of the bandit Zelim Khan, and of the glorious achievements of the heroes of the recent civil war. Each song was an epic, and the only way to shut off the flow of poetry and song was to offer the troubadour a glass of throat-moistener.

By the time the bride, her face covered, accompanied by her special lady friend and followed by other women, slipped into the room and squatted down in a corner, the men were in the

right spirit for the dance. As soon as the piper and drummer started up, the crowd began to whoop and clap hands, and one man, a member of the family, took the floor, to be joined a moment later by a woman. The first minute or two they danced as already described and then it was all different. The stiff gestures, the expressionless faces, so characteristic of the dancing of the Chokh women, were not seen here. The Botlikh woman lets herself go, and her gestures, her radiant face and happy smile, the movements of her whole body, express joyous emotion to such an extent that it becomes contagious. The moving away from the man, always turning the back on him, which is seen at Chokh, is only one of the movements in the Botlikh lezginka. The Botlikh belle expects a certain amount of wooing, but she intends to yield in time, and when the swain moves up to her and stretches his right arm over her shoulders until they almost touch she happily swings around the circle with him two or three times. If he thinks she is an easy conquest, he is mistaken, for by a graceful movement she slips out from under his arm and flits away to the other end of the circle to win his praise and admiration in dancing before him. He looks on, singing her praises and applauding with all his might. She is not hard-hearted, and after displaying her accomplishments she stops and gives him a chance to show off his, while she in turn applauds. The dance is brought to an end by her leaving the circle and his taking off his hat and making her a curtsey.

A man naturally prefers to dance with the prettiest woman and the best dancer, and though the man does not choose his partner and the woman follows her turn, yet I am safe in assuming that it does not always work out as prosaically as that. There is a great deal of rivalry and jealousy, as everywhere else, and one evening when a fair lady was dancing with one of the men another stepped in and shoved his cap in the face of the first one and took his place. A minute later a third "cut out" the second, and this might have gone on had not another woman saved the situation by taking the place of the heart-breaker. Cutting in is regarded as fair, but it is rather risky.

Botlikh dancing pleased me and I said so in one of the numerous responses to toasts I had to make, and praised particularly a certain couple that had excelled all others. When I had sat down and the music started up again the fair dancer, a beautiful and attractive woman, stepped up to the table and invited me to take a turn with her. Although I remembered my Chokh experience and had fully determined to act the "important person," yet I could not refuse that beaming, blushing face and tempting smile, and I stepped out. Later in the night, when the local poet sang the virtues of the bride, he monotoned among other things: "You are honored above all other brides of Dagestan, for a stranger of the lower world danced at your wedding." My gallant and awkward stunt, though it brought me no glory, at least gave material to the versifier.

The groom was not in sight, and when I expressed a wish to see the newlyweds dance, he was sent for; but he was so dead drunk that he could hardly stand up, and after making a turn or two the poor bride crawled back into her corner, while her lord was hustled out. Besides the lezginka one man very skilfully performed with three kinzhals, one in his mouth and one in each of his hands, and another tried a Cossack dance. Russian influence on Botlikh dancing is very marked, owing to the Russian garrison which was stationed here in the Tsar's day. Several times in the course of each of the three evenings, the crowd called on a certain funny man to mimic and imitate a coward, and, though he did the same thing over and over again, the spectators did not seem to tire of it. At the breaking up of the parties, we drank again to each other's health and wished each other all the good things of life. The women added their blessing and apologized for having contributed so little to my entertainment (I did not agree with that), but explained that I had come at a very bad time—wood-chopping week.

Would that I could say something more in favor of Botlikh and the district (Andiiski) of which it is the capital. It suffered much from the war and now suffers the usual consequences, in addition to poor government and bandit raids. Most of those

in power had formerly been tsarist "nachalniks," but were now Knights of the Red Flag, *ipso facto* Communists and office-holders. At the head of the government was Shamkhal, a most picturesque-looking individual and noted fighter, but not otherwise distinguished. He lived in his own aul some twenty miles from Botlikh and left all the affairs of state to his assistants, who were a law unto themselves. These men were not removed because there were no other Communists to replace them, and there were no more Communists because there was no more "manufactory." The school had not opened its doors; the hospital had closed its gates; and the children's home was a disgrace even in Dagestan. The little tots were fed once a day on cornmeal soup and were housed in a dirty building. On the occasion of our coming they were dressed up in some cast-off women's underwear of European make, and the boys were a funny sight. If the head of the home had taken half as much pride in his children as he did in his dancing, the children would have been much better off than they were. He was about ready to throw up his job because he could barely read and could not fill out the countless blanks and reports.

In the pre-revolutionary days, the people of Andiiski *okrug* [district] carried their fruit to Checheni, near by, to be exchanged for grain. The Chechentsi are noted thieves and bandits and proud of their reputation. The Russian government always had to keep a strong force among them, but since they have become self-determinationists, Moscow has left them in peace. The only law they respect is force, though occasionally the religious men have some influence with them. In their plundering raids, the Chechentsi come within sight of Botlikh, but when the Botlikhians give chase and pass the frontier, they are called down by the Moscow authorities for invading the land of a free people. Were it not for the fact that there was great need of grain, which would be cut off in case of serious trouble, the Botlikh gang could have looked after their own interests; but under the circumstances they could do nothing but complain and take their chances.

Fruit-growing is the principal industry of Botlikh, and much time is spent on the orchards and vineyards. When the grapes are almost ripe, the village selects a committee to watch over the fields, and for a certain period no one but the committee is allowed near the vineyards. Should there be a suspicion that someone has stolen grapes during the night, the suspect is called out to an open field near the river and kept there until he can prove by the contents of his stomach that he is innocent. When the committee thinks the time propitious for grape-picking, it announces the fact, and then the women and children dress up and proceed to the fields.

We arrived at Botlikh on Wednesday and planned to go to Andii on Thursday, but Thursday morning Shamkhal came and proposed that we go to Trout Lake, and we agreed. We mounted and started at one o'clock, climbed two hours and came to Tonda, where the whole population was out to greet us and to invite us to rest. We drank all the moonshine on the table, ate all the food placed before us, danced with all the women in sight, related the adventures of the bandit Zelim Khan, sang of love and war, mounted the best Tonda horses, and returned to Botlikh to do the same thing all over again. It was the Botlikh spirit.

As we had to wait, Friday, March 2, for horses, I took advantage of the fine weather to visit the salt works. The trail led us up and down and around the mountains before it brought us out into a dark canyon, having a dirty village on each side of its almost up-and-down bare walls. We followed the street for a distance, passing donkeys loaded with sheepskin bags filled with salt water. At one of the villages, some of the natives took us in charge, and led us out to the salt springs. Near them on the bank were beds of rocks covered with thick layers of sand over which salt water was poured until the sand was thoroughly soaked. This operation was probably repeated several times, but I am not certain. When the sand is in the proper condition, it is carried up the bank where there is a small pit containing one or two wooden troughs. The sand is dumped

into these troughs and more salt water is poured on the top, which seeps through into a box below. From there, the water is carried in sheepskin bags on the backs of animals or of women to the village, a mile away, to be boiled out.

It is very hard and very discouraging work, and the poor bent-over women with torn clothes and dirty bodies were a pitiful sight. As I passed them, they held up their hands and pleaded that something be done for them. It is difficult to get accurate information from these people, and I do not vouch for the statement they gave me that under favorable conditions one woman in ten days can produce from four to eight sheepskins of salt water (depending upon whether she has one or two troughs) for boiling, and that it takes fifteen sheepskins for one pud (36 pounds) of salt, which will exchange for a yard of biaz in Botlikh and a pud and a half of corn in Checheni (a round trip of six days). It takes twelve hours to boil out a pan of salt water, and the wood for that purpose has to be brought from a distance. These are the conditions of work when the sun shines, but when the rain comes and washes out the beds and fills the pits the situation is much worse.

Though poor, they yet insisted that we have a bite to eat. The head of the local government took us to his home, where he gave us grapes, a little meat, and tea. We departed soon after eating, and as we passed the other village, all the male population was lined up on the road to honor the man from America who, according to rumor, carried with him a bag full of gold and was buying Dagestan from the Soviet. These people begged that we should pay them a visit and buy them too, but as it was getting dark we declined with thanks and pushed on.

When we set out from Khunzakh for Botlikh, we had expected to return over the same route and had even promised the people of a certain village that we should pass the night with them. But after being in Botlikh, I decided to save time by going on horseback to Shura over a shorter and more difficult route. Shamkhal sent out his scouts to the neighboring villages

and rounded up the necessary number of horses. I had a suspicion that the owners of the animals did not let them go without a strong protest, but I did not inquire too closely into the matter. Shamkhal invited us Saturday morning to have our breakfast and first drink with him. After we had toasted each other, I do not remember the number of times, about fifteen of us, including Shamkhal, a couple of noted bandits, and others less noted, mounted and started. The village population, the two-piece band, and the boys in girls' underwear lined the street to cheer us on our way. Guessing that I was a poor rider, they gave me a horse that was as safe as an old cow and had the gait of that animal. Shamkhal probably noticed it, for when we had gone a few miles he asked the honorable judge to let me have his easy-gaited pony. After that I had no difficulty in keeping up.

The Dagestan mountain horses are about the size of our Indian ponies but stronger, I think, for they are looked after better. They are given hay, sometimes grain, are curried (with the finger nails), brushed (with the sleeve of a shuba), and shod (with "Asiatic" shoes—small iron plates which cover all but the center of the hoof). Most of the ponies have an easy gait and trot, and nearly all are good walkers, which the Indian ponies are not. The Caucasus saddle in use is at least as comfortable as our cowboy saddle, but is much lighter in weight and easier on the horse, for I noticed no sore backs.

We kept the wagon road for about twenty miles, as far as Tokh, and then turned off and followed a very difficult trail. We made the aul Inkho some time after noon, and found there a table covered with food and drink, with the whole male population forming a semicircle in front of it, with the female population completing the circle on the high ground immediately in the rear. The people looked ragged and poor, and they complained that during the civil war half of the inhabitants had been killed off, while now they had no market for their fruit, the only thing they could raise on these rocks. When Shamkhal told them that help might come from

America, the spokesman looked doubtful and said, "We cannot believe that help can come from so far away and from so far down. It would be too difficult to carry up, but we thank the Americans for thinking of us."

At two o'clock we were in the saddle again and followed a trail that was even worse than the one in the morning. My roughneck friends paid little attention to it, dashed up and down as if they were on the level, and raced when the lay of the land permitted it. Abdulrachman attempted it and had the misfortune to fall off his horse and strain the muscles of his leg in trying to get his foot out of the stirrup.

About five o'clock, we stopped at the home of a well-known old man, the father of a well-known one-eyed bandit, but now Knight of the Red Flag. The old man is over six feet tall, straight as an arrow and strong as a bull, having recently killed a wolf with no other weapon than a club. He was a young man when Shamil surrendered, and he is therefore past seventy years of age. He is noted for his hospitality and for his musical accomplishments. I can testify to the quality of the former, but I am greatly in doubt as to the latter, though there are those who like Shamil war songs at the top of a shrill voice accompanied by the tapping of a big pan or a huge tambourine. I asked the old man how he explained his great strength at his age, and he said that he had never tasted liquor, never smoked, and ever loved the ladies, being married to four and attached to a number of others.

While we were at the table, two or three men came in, one of them in particular being the worse for drink and ready to fight because "they had stolen his American guest." He was from the village between Khunzakh and Botlikh where we had originally planned to spend the night on our way back. A big party had been planned for us and when the inhabitants somehow learned that we were going another way, they had sent a party over the hills to bring us. Our gang disarmed the scrapper and treated him a bit rough. As we still had quite a distance to go to the village where we were to spend the night, and as it

was getting dark, I took one of the guards and started ahead, knowing that the others of the party would soon follow. About ten minutes later the gang, by this time feeling quite happy, came up with me and some of them passed me riding at break-neck speed up and down the treacherous trail. Bunched in between them was the scrapper, hatless, with his saddle loose and kept in place merely by his weight, and no one caring what happened to him. At that time we were in Avarski district, the home of the scrapper, but half an hour later when we crossed back into Andiiski, the okrug of which Shamkhal was the head, the attitude of the men in our party changed. "Now," they said, "we are at home and he is our kunak and we must take care of him." They fixed the saddle, gave him a cap, and took his horse by the bridle.

It became quite dark, but we dashed on and when we neared the aul Chirkata, our destination, somebody shot off his revolver as a signal of our coming and for the people to line up.

We had the usual reception and hospitality, but our sixty versts of mountain travel had made us too tired to encourage a great deal of gaiety. The old man, mentioned above, followed us to this village and gave us some more of his Shamil war songs, but he had competition from one of the local artists, who tried to out-sing him. Between songs there were discussions of important problems such as who had the best fighting dog, and what should be done to a man who would not treat the crowd when his dog had won the fight. When boiled mutton was brought to the table, Hassan called attention to the shoulder-blade and the conversation centered around the ability of shepherds to read these bones. One of the old men who stood alongside the wall related this interesting story: In a certain sheep camp a number of shepherds were eating supper, and one of them, after taking a look at the shoulder-blade, grabbed his rifle and started for home. Seeing this, another shepherd took a look at the bone and began to laugh. "The fool," he said, "he saw that somebody was sleeping with his wife, but he did not see that it was a newborn babe." Similar stories were related

and listened to with great interest by the mob inside the room while the crowd outside strained their ears. I am afraid I must have been dozing, for I do not recollect how I got outside, but I remember going with Abdulah to the home of his kunak, a man from Chokh, who had one household here, and another there, and divided his time between the ladies.

We had over sixty versts to go the next day, and, from all reports, over a most difficult trail. I, therefore, persuaded Abdulah that we rise early and start on time. We got up about eight, and when we came to the home of Shamkhal's kunak we found the outside surrounded by sheepskin-shuba men and the inside filled with a drinking, singing crowd, which Abdulah joined. I preferred the sheepy smell and the ramlike stares of the crowd outside to the monotonous music and never-ending toasts inside, and came out. There I found a gathering of old sages who wished to speak to me. Through their spokesman, a white-haired patriarch, they asked me to tell them whether I really came from the lower world.

"Is it true," they inquired, "that they have flying people in America? Is it true that in the lower world people walk and ride between the ground? Is it true that there are gold, silver, and precious stones over there? Is it true that the people in America are highly educated? If it is true, will you ask them to come and teach us how to become rich and how to irrigate the fields so that they will yield good crops?" I tried to answer their questions as best I could. I told them that the Americans acquired their gold, silver, and precious stones by working them out of the mountains, that the Dagestanians had the same opportunities, and so on; but I am not at all sure that I got my ideas across.

One old man tried to break in several times but was cried down by the others. He finally got his chance and commenced to abuse the authorities for their neglect of the suffering population. "One hundred and fifty people," he shouted, "died last summer from eating a wormy weed. All that we have is a little fruit which we formerly carried to the lowlands to exchange for

grain, but now the government impresses our animals into its service and we have not the use of them. Many of our people lie naked in their huts and will die there because they have not any clothes." As he spoke, he made a movement which called forth a protest from the bystanders, but he defied them and unbuttoned his shuba exposing his old hairy body naked to the waist. "Go," he cried out, "and tell the people in America how we live and how we are treated," and moved back. Other old men struggled for speech, and I felt very embarrassed. It was for Shamkhal and not for me to listen to such complaints.

Fortunately, the attention of the old men was turned from me to a dog fight. With the others, I rushed to the balcony of the house and looked down into the arena below. There, held by the leash, was a huge, muscular dog, strong of limb and big of head, growling and pawing the ground and getting ready for the struggle which he felt was before him. Several men, among whom I recognized Ali, the one-eyed bandit, the son of the old man already mentioned, stood by the dog to act as seconds, I suppose. A few moments later another dog was led in from another direction, and as the two came in sight, their trainers began to beat them to enrage them and then let them go.

The two beasts jumped for each other's throats, snarled, bit and rolled on the ground and, like a pair of wrestlers, first one and then the other was on top. Then their jaws locked and all was still. One had the other down and would not let him up, and when there was no longer any question as to the victor the seconds jumped in, grabbed the short tails and pulled with all their might until the dogs were separated. A few minutes later, two other champions were brought in and a similar scene took place. It was a savage sight but not a bloody one, and I could not see that any dog was badly hurt.

By this time, it was already ten-thirty. I had had all the entertainment and honor I could possibly stand; but my companions had not, for they were still drinking and singing. I sent for Abdulah and told him that we must start, and he

replied, "*Sei chas*" ["Immediately"], and went back to join his crowd. He was not yet as drunk as he might be, but he was quite happy. It was necessary to act at once, and I therefore inquired of the crowd which horse I was to ride. I then learned that the head of the local government at Ashilta had brought his pony over for me to ride to his village while he was to walk alongside of it. I mounted and started, knowing full well that my comrades-in-moonshine, though far gone in their cups, would not have it be known that their kunak had been so neglected that he had to go off alone. I was right, for ten minutes later I heard galloping behind me and as I turned around, some twenty-five wild men, armed to the teeth, were trying to catch up. We retraced our route of the day before about two miles, crossed a bridge, and then came to the parting of the ways, for here we took leave of Shamkhal and his band of moonshiners, dancers, and Knights of the Red Flag, who were returning to Botlikh, while a small party of eight of us were going to Shura.

Before parting, Shamkhal entrusted my life and safety to Itkhali, a bandit companion of the famous robber Zelim Khan in the days before the war, a comrade in arms of Shamkhal in the civil struggle and fellow Knight of the Red Flag. Itkhali had thirty-five lives to his credit, twenty-five of which he acquired in carrying out his professional bandit duties and ten as blood avenger. In besieging a certain aul Itkhali's brother was killed, and when the place was finally taken, Itkhali shot the first ten men in cold blood and in this way more than avenged the death. In one of the fights he lost his left eye, and this disfigurement as well as his pock-marked face strikes terror. He is the only Dagestanian who would not give up his seat to a man older than himself, and nobody dared suggest it to him.

Leaving out Abdulah and Abdurachman, my other companions were almost as big cut-throats as Itkhali, but he was their master. The mounts were as disreputable as the riders. Two of them rode shabby black mules, and two others, equally

dirty and mean white mules, and to their homemade saddles they had tied fox, wolf, and other skins of wild animals.

After an hour's steep climbing, we came to Ashilta, where we were welcomed by the population with bread and salt and a speech in which America was thanked for the proffered help. One kind-faced, old man, who spoke Russian unusually well, appealed to Abdulah to intercede with the central government to remit for the time being the payment of the 140 puds of seed lent the previous year and the interest on that loan (25 pounds of grain for each pud of 40 Russian pounds). Thinking that I was mistaken, I asked Abdulah whether this was really the rate and he assured me that it was. The old gentleman also asked if something could not be done to revoke the recent order requiring the inhabitants of the aul to go to Khunzakh (40 versts away) to get a permit to visit Shura (56 versts away); for, as matters stood, it was almost impossible, because of the time consumed, for people to go to Shura to trade their fruit for bread. I asked Abdulah the reason for the order, and he said it was to enable the police of Shura to catch the robbers and thieves who flocked thither.

Kind-hearted Abdulah, who really loved his people, promised to do everything, and to show that he bore no ill-will to anybody accepted the invitation to have a drink. At noon, I got Abdulah away from the table and on the horse. He, having the best mount, gave a whoop and disappeared, with the wild men following him and my plug, punched by Itkhali, who never let me out of sight, trying to keep up. Of all the wild and dangerous rides, this one from Ashilta to Gimri was the worst. Even Abdulrachman, who had knocked about a good deal in Dagestan, admitted it. For three hours we were in the river gorge, hardly daring to look down to the water hundreds of feet below as it dashed over the rocks at terrific speed and with tremendous noise. The trail hugged the rocky walls and was so steep and so covered with loose rocks that it was a great wonder to me how the horses kept their footing. Itkhali watched my animal and when we came to a particularly bad

place he gave some kind of a grunt, and a rider either in front or behind me jumped off his mount and took the bridle of my horse and led it. There were spots where even these reckless men got off and walked. One bad bridge which had served its time long before, caused us some misgivings, but we got over it. On the other side of the bridge, the gorge opened up a bit and my companions whooped up and whipped up and we dashed off again at breakneck speed.

About three o'clock, we rode into Gimri, the birthplace of Shamil, where we found Abdulah and some refreshments. One of the inhabitants told us that he had spent a year in San Francisco but had tired of it and come back to his mountains. From here to Shura was still thirty-five versts and the Gimriites advised us not to attempt the mountain that day but wait until the next; but as I suspected another party I decided to move on. We were accompanied for a short distance by the former San Franciscan and, when he left us, continued by ourselves. The Gimri ridge has a bad reputation and when I looked up and saw the trail winding thousands of feet above me, I felt a little discouraged. We remained on the horses as long as we dared, but they soon gave out and we had to walk. When we had rounded the point where I thought the summit of the ridge came to an end, I was stupified to see looming up above me a still higher one. In order to keep up, I held on to the stirrup, but as the trail was too narrow I was forced to the rear for a tailhold. I admit it was an unfair advantage to take, but as the horse did not kick, no one else need complain. Abdulrachman, with his sore leg, tried to walk but was forced to mount again and drop behind because his little pony had to stop and rest. Abdulah, like a true Dagestanian, would not take off his shuba and plodded along with the perspiration pouring off his face. At last, we passed the clouds and rounded the second point, and there right over my head was a third ridge, the worst of all. As my little pony was completely exhausted and could not even drag itself along, my bandit guardian gave me a tailhold on his, while he encouraged mine with a whip. Every few steps we

had to stop and rest, for the trail was exceedingly steep and tiring. After three hours of this kind of exhausting work we came to the top, and there a most glorious view spread before us. The mountains to the west were enveloped in the wonderful sunset glow and the valleys to the east were filled with white mist, and this, as it followed the contour of the mountains, formed small bays and harbors for heavenly ships.

Night came on while we, Abdulah, Itkhali, and I, were taking in the sight. As soon as the sun disappeared it became cold and dark, for the moon and the stars did not quite light up the faint trail. We had to depend on our horses, trust to luck, and keep our feet free in the stirrup to be ready to jump in case of need.

We stumbled along for another hour and a half before we reached the aul Upper Karani, and there we decided to spend the night. Abdulah hunted up the home of a kunak, who was not at home, but his wife took us in and asked us to take off our shoes so as not to desecrate her prayer rug. Abdulah and I did as we were bid, but Itkhali gave a look of contempt and sat down. She let him rest. While waiting for something to eat, I asked Itkhali if he would go with me to America. He said he would like to but he was afraid people would laugh at him, which would make him mad, he would kill them, and he would not know where to hide. I did not insist. About an hour after our arrival, Abdulrachman wandered in swearing he would never take this route again. In the meantime, the elders of the village heard of our coming and called, offering us everything they had, which was plenty of food and comfortable beds.

Next morning Abdulah had to send back the horse which he had got at Ashlita, and asked the head of the local government to provide him with another as far as Shura. The official ordered a certain man to give his, but he made objections and protested. To a certain point, Itkhali was a silent spectator, but when the man became a bit noisy, Itkhali went to him and with a voice that carried weight demanded, "Where is that horse? Show it to me!" After that there was no more discussion, for

the man brought the animal. We started about nine o'clock, keeping in the sun for an hour and then dropping into the clouds, where we remained until we reached Shura at noon, Monday, March 5. Abdulah was worn out, ill, and had to go to bed; Abdulrachman was nursing a sore leg; and I was too tired to accept an invitation to a banquet for that evening.

Next day, the sixth, I went to Petrovsk and on arriving was delighted to learn that, in response to my telegram of ten days before, a representative of the American Relief Administration was already on the spot making arrangements to receive and distribute the food and the medical supplies on the way. This promptness on our part was a bit too much for the natives, and they explained it, as they did our ability to walk on the ceiling, by saying that "the Americans are very clever and can do anything."

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